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The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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The Return of Harlequin

SOME years ago when what we elect to call "realism" was digging its deepest and energetically dredging to light every uncomfortable manifestation of ordinary life, when our most promising young artists wore double spectacles lest anything nauseous escape them, we wistfully suggested a return to fantasy as an amelioration of the somewhat gruesomely sincere. In America, at that time, James Branch Cabell seemed almost the sole practitioner of fantasy, our only (quite outmoded) romantic. Utterly disregarded for years he had found himself distressedly in the spotlight, not at first as an acclaimed adroit draftsman of a rare art, but as the author of a book suppressed by the authorities.

Together with our mild suggestion as to fantasy went a milder prophesy that the pendulum oscillating between grim realism and what Stevenson called mere "tushery" was bound to swing returning, that being the natural law of pendulums. Therefore today we are not surprised to observe that fantasy seems really to be having its hour. But we did not prophesy that it was the poets who would restore us harlequin, though it is they, we hold, who have been largely instrumental in hastening the change that has come over the spirit of our dream.

One thinks at once of Walter De La Mare, though "Henry Brocken" (for instance) is an older book than readers of the latest editions may realize. In a newer generation one cites Aldous Huxley, who started as a brilliantly original poet and has forged a prose style that can both etch with acid and juggle deftly with fantastic ideas. One acknowledges Carl Van Vechten's several fantasies, as those of a poet *manqué*, Christopher Morley's "Where the Blue Begins," Elinor Wylie's "Jennifer Lorn" and "The Venetian Glass Nephew." These last in America,—but to return to England, one at least of the famous poetic Sitwells has, this year, (turning from the voluminous production of acrobatic verse) produced in "Triple Fugue" brilliant stories that blend a most ebullient gaiety with tragic drama. He whips up what appears to be a literary confection that yet conceals a core of solid nourishment. Such men as he and Huxley cause words to coruscate and outrageous or merely hilarious asides to abound. But so long as this is a removal from the old dark suet pudding of Sex and Circumstance, God be thanked! It is not, in Huxley, a far removal, perhaps, but there is more sinew and pith in the argument.

Then, too, the most popular English novelist (in America) at the moment, though, to be sure, he cannot be claimed as a Heliconian, is Michael Arlen, who, at least, achieves often a perfect frenzy of fantasy (some of it, perhaps, unconscious) in his tricky tales. And, to revert once more to America, that true lyric poet, Robert Nathan, has now established his reputation as a prose fantasist of unusual gifts. And, if we have Evelyn Scott (fundamentally a poet) still dealing in sombre neuroses in her novels, and Herbert S. Gorman (an indubitable poet) pitching his first novel in the key of Joyce, we have also this season the prose fantasy of the younger poet, Donald Douglas, have witnessed Maxwell Bodenheim's voyagings for several years in the metaphysical balloon of his fantastic prose, and note Conrad Aiken's new excursions into other realms than verse.

Anyone who has perused Eddison's "The Worm Ouroboros" in England, or chanced upon the new "Mr. Godly Beside Himself" by Gerald Bullett (also an English writer) perceives other straws that indicate the breeze. Dunsany, a poet, has of course for years shaken fantasy after fantasy out of a seemingly inexhaustible cornucopia; and James Stephens, a poet, has also produced them. But these are Irishmen, and in Ireland fairies are expected.

Sabatini, in his late "arrival," after years of novel-writing, has influenced—aside from pure fantasy—a return to "cloak and sword." The recent Charles Boardman Hawes competition has increased the output of costume romance. And to look for other indications of that return swing of the pendulum of which we spoke, we find one even in Sinclair Lewis's "Babbitt," where the mere truth was discovered as stranger than any dream and the preposterous descried upon our own doorstep, bearing out the late Aubrey Beardsley's remark that "All the monsters are not in Africa."

Yes, we can count a considerable scattering of bright birds risen from the bog of psychoanalysis, that now wing the heaven of creative literature. They bear romance as healing upon their wings. Some of the more poetic are fire-crowned with fantasy. The return of etymological legerdemain, of pleasing extravagance of style, of the exercise of the unreined imagination as opposed to the labor-

(*Continued on page* 645)

The Snare

By EDWARD DAVISON

FAR away and long ago
This trouble at my heart began:
Ere Eden perished like a flower,
Or Eve had shed her tears an hour,
Or Adam knew himself a man,
In every leaf of every tree
Beauty had set a snare for me.

Far away and long ago
Her loveliest song began to chime.
Bright Hector fell, and at the stroke
Ten thousand hearts like mine awoke
In every age and every clime.
She stood bestriding Time and Space
Amid the stars, and lit the rose
With scent and color, and she chose
My country for a dwelling place,
And set a snare in every tree
Awaiting me, awaiting me!

This Week

AN ENGAGING FANTASIA. By *Edward Lucas White.*

IRREDUCIBLE GUSTO. By *Floyd Dell.*

MASS-HISTORY. By *Wilbur Cortez Abbott.*

Next Week

SPRING BOOK NUMBER

Published by Time Incorporated,
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The Weekly News-Magazine

Literary Independence

By FRANCES NEWMAN
Author of "The Short Story's Mutations"

THREE or four weeks ago, when a far-darting Melbourne bookseller sent his list to my library, I read through its dozen pages without the satisfaction of meeting a familiar name—which was not very astonishing, since the only literary Australian names I know are Robert Boldrewood and Mrs. Campbell Praed and the belligerent poet called Skeyhill, and since those names are perhaps not an Australian bookseller's pride. But, among all the names which apparently are his pride, not even the discourse on the relative virtues of Socrates and Saint Paul seemed likely to reveal any very good reason why England and Europe and America have allowed Australia to possess its Skeyhills in peace and to lack its Merediths in peace. So—naturally enough, when my eyes fell on a history of Canadian literature a few days later, I read through all of its index and some of its pages to discover the literary justification of the dominion which, in its social aspect at least, England sees with less assistance from its lorgnon. Only the name of Bliss Carman rose to meet my eyes, but the doctor of philosophy who submitted this dissertation in partial fulfilment of the requirements for his degree had set the Confederation as his farther boundary, and Professor Leacock and Robert Service were doubtless absent because they were born too late, not because of any intellectual inferiority to Mr. Carman, or to the Richardson who is the father of whatever fictions Canada may have produced, or to the unfortunate poet whose name I forget rather than increase the mortification of a man who may have lived, so far as I know, to read that in a small way he was to Canada what Longfellow was to the United States.

Since the doctor's dissertation did not reveal any more reasons than the bookseller's list, why the dominions beyond the seas were allowed to possess their Services in peace and to lack their Merediths in peace, even when Kipling's star had set on India and Katherine Mansfield's star had not yet risen over New Zealand, and since family pride will not explain the critical reticence of a land which, unofficially, has always seemed to regard its colonies as cousins from the country rather than as offspring, the only reasonable explanation would seem to be that loyal colonies require playwrights and novelists even less than they require ambassadors and battleships, and that when rebellious colonies insistently assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, they incur an obligation to provide themselves with poets and playwrights and philosophers, as well as with judges and senators and presidents.

Evidently we cannot avoid the obligation by demonstrating that a talent for government and a talent for the arts have never been the indivisible national characteristics a talent for cookery and a talent for millinery still are. The rulers and the writers we have provided for ourselves showed an unmistakable likeness in the day of Washington and Franklin and in the day of Lincoln and Whitman, and they still show that likeness in the day of Coolidge and Sinclair Lewis. Patriotism will not allow the supposition that we might have learned to govern ourselves better if we had not run away to seek our fortune, and even if the literature of Canada and the literature of Australia did not forbid the supposition that we might have learned more

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about writing as colonies than as states, any history of English fiction offers excellent evidence that we dissolved the political bonds which had connected us with England just in time to escape the degeneration of its prose. From the year eighteen hundred and eighteen, when "Persuasion" was published, to the year eighteen hundred and fifty-seven, when "The Ordeal of Richard Feverel" was published, no writer of English fiction seems to have believed that every word in a novel must justify its right to be written down, and that the justification must be a charm of its own, quite apart from its mere meaning. Even after Meredith suggested that idea, some thirty years passed drearily by before his literary compatriots crossed the Channel and discovered that Balzac had been dead long enough for France to realize again that a fiction has not a history's right to be cherished as tenderly as a portrait of Henry the Fourth is cherished, entirely without regard to its æsthetic virtues, and that it must justify every line as the lines of the "Primavera" justify Botticelli for proceeding without sittings from Venus and Flora and Mercury and the Graces.

* * *

None of Meredith's eminent contemporaries, certainly, wrote as badly as our Cooper, whose prose is so distressingly anacoluthic that even Poe was aware of what he called the grammatical inaccuracies of "Wyandotté," and almost aware that grammatical inaccuracies do not necessarily spoil a charming style and that grammatical accuracy is far from creating one. But an unfortunately large number of Cooper's less critical contemporaries seem to have been as undisturbed by his incoherences as William Dean Howells's less critical contemporaries were by his lapses from Henry James's standard of sophistication, and almost as undisturbed as Carl Van Vechten's less critical contemporaries are by his lapses from his own standard of sophistication. The extremely gradual rise of our taste and our knowledge during the century that has elapsed between "The Spy" and "The Tattooed Countess" leaves little reason for hoping that "Jennifer Lorn" and "Jurgen" will influence our prose any more rapidly than "The Egoist" and "The Ordeal of Richard Feverel" influenced the prose which, whether we like it or not, will be our standard of perfection until we set up a standard of our own and the American language finds a stronger solvent for the etymological bonds which connect it with England than a fancy for saying elevator rather than lift and shoe rather than boot.

Cooper was probably unaware that a prose fiction provides its author with none of the formal shelters which protect a poet and a playwright from the revealing light of day. He probably did not reflect that a poet may put his grammatical inaccuracies down to the necessity of being continuously iambic, and that a playwright may put his grammatical inaccuracies down to the necessity of revealing his characters' intellectual frailties. If Cooper had written plays instead of fiction, "He was advancing by the only road that was ever traveled by the stranger as he approached the hut; or, he came up the valley," might have been the carefully composed utterance of a pioneer instead of the accidental utterance of an inadequately equipped novelist. If Howells had written solemn plays instead of farces and solemn fiction, "He had not built, but had bought very cheap of a terrified gentleman of good extraction," would have been the inelegance of Silas Lapham instead of the inelegance of Howells himself. And if Laurence Stallings had made "Plumes" another play, "Penelope was hurrying through a summer teacher's course in piano," and "Richard had not fleshened to the beam commensurate with his six feet of Plume," would have been only two quotable examples of speech among those citizens of Georgia who give their children such magnificent names as Richard Coeur de Lion Plume. When Eugene O'Neill composed the conversation between Mildred Douglas and her unfortunate aunt in the second scene of "The Hairy Ape," he did indeed suggest the terrible thing a portrait of a lady would become in one of his novels—even in England, I believe, affluence of the third generation is expected to produce a lady. But Theodore Dreiser himself does not often succeed in adding inelegancies to the inelegancies of the characters in his plays, and in the excellent comedy Carl Van Vechten might make from "The Tattooed Countess," "he had sensed the fact that she was in love with him" and "when she married" and "dress suit" and "had been loaned" and "dresser" would pass from the narrative into a vocabulary admirably suited to people who were in the deplorable habit of cutting asparagus into small pieces and boiling the small pieces in cream. In the same excellent comedy, Mrs. Johns might have reminded her son that she "could not presume to open her house suddenly to this visiting guest," and her adoption of a phrase that is not often heard except in a newspaper's mention of a concert for charity in the drawing room or the ballroom of some great lady would have been even more admirably suited to a mother who was not an intimate friend of the countess's sister. And if Willa Cather had written "A Lost Lady" in a prologue, three acts, and an epilogue, "Niel was proud like his mother; she died when he was five years old," would have been an example of our inconsequential speech instead of a sentence which does not triumph over Cooper even by its semicolon.

But Miss Cather has never seemed to assume that sophistication is the chief literary virtue, and her sentences are at least true to her own values. Apparently she does not wish to write well, and apparently she does not wish to avoid a figure so worn as "this war was undreamed of, hidden in the womb of time," or to compare her lost lady with anything more original than steel of Damascus. And when Sherwood Anderson says that John Webster "got out the little picture of the Virgin and set it up on a kind of dresser that stood in a corner," he is true to his own values, and to John Webster's values, and to the somewhat distracted values of "Many Marriages." Mr. Van Vechten would have been perfectly entitled to write "dresser" and "dress suit" and "loaned" in the narrative that connects the conversations of Miss Poore and Mrs. Townsend and Gareth Johns and of a countess whose first thirty years seem to have been lived in Maple Valley. And he would have been entitled to connect their homely speech with what is, I suppose, his own evolved vocabulary appearing for the first time without the peroxide of George Moore or the henna of Ronald Firbank. But when he writes "dresser" and "dress suit" and "loaned" in the same narrative with "morigeration" and "sciapodous," he is wearing etymological overalls with an etymological top hat. And he is joining with Sinclair Lewis and Floyd Dell, and some other only less celebrated novelists, to prove that when the Society of Jesus insists on the impossibility of erasing childish impressions, it is as wise as its enemies fear, and that Maple Valley and Gopher Prairie and Port Royal must be very like the towns from which their chroniclers escaped to each other's society.

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There is a curious example of these enduring impressions in "The Tatooed Countess" when Mr. Van Vechten assumes with his former fellow citizens that the nude figure in Titian's "Sacred and Profane Love" is Profanity—a mistake so different from Aldous Huxley's assumption that Michelangelo's monument to a Lorenzo de Medici is necessarily a monument to Lorenzo the Magnificent that even the author of "Main Street" should have been able to see a different distinction between their essays in sophistication. Nevertheless, people who hope to see American fiction well written cannot fail to cherish Mr. Van Vechten's books for their realization that such a quality as style exists, and for the examples of his conviction which have brought a realization of style to countless thousands of our undergraduates. And the same people must be grateful to Thomas Beer for writing "Sandoval," and for writing it without succumbing to "the fact that," even if they feel that the best prose for a novel is not necessarily a prose which manages to put at least one figure of speech into every subject and into every predicate, into every protasis and into every apodosis. "Sandoval" was apparently thought phrase by phrase in one language and then translated phrase by phrase into a language as different as Turkish presumably is from English. No one, of course, can be sure of the working even of his own mind, but in the first paragraph, Mr. Beer may be supposed to have thought "the forest swallowed up the funeral," and then to have translated his thought into "the forest ate the funeral." And a good deal farther along, he may be supposed to have thought "a ring sparkled on his left hand," and then to have translated his thought into "a ring blinked on his left hand."

If there were not such eminent critical evidence that I am wrong, I should still think that a comparison of one page from "Sandoval" with one page from "Women in Love" would convince any rational person that a man who wishes to write in images must think in images, and that thinking up a fresh idea is the only entirely successful way of achieving a fresh phrase. I do still think that almost any rational person must realize that these men and women who have a passion for good prose which they cannot realize in their own writing are our slightly belated American equivalent of the Englishmen of the eighteen nineties and of the Frenchmen of the eighteen eighties—and not merely because some of them have the same touching conviction that the departed waters of the Ilissus have flowed into the Seine, and that the portrayal of perfect immorality will lead to perfect sophistication and perfect prose. Probably no one over twenty-five years old would still maintain that Oscar Wilde wrote good prose, but I cannot remember seeing a suggestion that the men of the eighteen nineties achieved good phrases oftener than they achieved good sentences because they came to literary consciousness when the novels of Thackeray and Dickens and George Eliot were the literature England read and respected. And neither do I remember seeing a suggestion that the men and women of the American nineteen twenties are suffering from the prose of Howells and Mark Twain and Winston Churchill, which was the literature America read and respected when they came to literary consciousness. James Branch Cabell and Elinor Wylie are the same sports in the America of Willa Cather and Theodore Dreiser that George Meredith and Henry James were in the England of George Eliot and Thomas Hardy, and not one of those four admirable writers can have fed his infant consciousness on the literature of his own country.

* * *

And neither do I remember seeing a suggestion —though Mr. Mencken has doubtless made it—that the improvement in American prose marches side by side with the victory of American doubts over American convictions. The men of the English eighteen nineties were solemn young men, for all their wit and all their wickedness, and our young men are solemn too. But there are Mr. Cabell and Mrs. Wylie, and there is Robert Nathan, and there are some others who are less eminent for various extenuating reasons, and probably none of them would go to the stake for any of the ideas they would not be likely to call their convictions. But our dawning doubts have not changed the most distinctive quality of American prose—the inability or the unwillingness of American writers to write simply when they write well. No prose written in English has ever been quite as simple as the prose written in French, or the prose written in Italian before Gabriele d'Annunzio discovered the pomegranate, but there are Englishmen who can write for the voice or at least for the double-stopped violin, and all Americans who write well write for the orchestra. None of us is willing to write a sentence without ideas that are vertical nearly as often as they are horizontal, and a great many of us are fond of language lofty enough for a major prophet, and a great many of us write nearly as many commas as we do words. Not many of us can write a story or a novel without showing a conviction that excellence of technique is something very like literary acrobatics, and probably we shall never learn the virtues of a form that does not project beyond the edges of its theme, even with the example of Sherwood Anderson's struggles for simplicity, so long as "Ethan Frome" is considered a truly extraordinary technical achievement. Its admirers, of course, have the excuse that a disagreeable story about New England villagers or Wessex dairymaids must always be superior to a somewhat less disagreeable story about the descendants of colonial governors, or about the descendants of crusaders. But "Ethan Frome" seems to have left most of our reviewers without any knees in their criticism because Mrs. Wharton began her story with the revelation of Ethan Frome's unhappy state and ended it with the revelation of the unhappy events which brought him to that state —a feat, I should have supposed, that a less experienced writer than Mrs. Wharton might have undertaken without a net under her.

But even a realization that the form and the style of a novel cannot be impressed on it as irrelevantly as new forms have been impressed on the waffle, and even doubts high as the heavens, will not be enough

(*Continued on page* 645)

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An Engaging Fantasia

THE TREASURES OF TYPHON. By EDEN PHILLPOTTS. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1925.

Reviewed by EDWARD LUCAS WHITE
Author of "Andivius Hedulio"

A FANTASIA should be judged as such. This is a fantasia. Nominally the events narrated occur in Greece in the lifetime of Menander and Epicurus, and Mr. Phillpotts has manifestly assimilated all the recorded facts as to the personality and actual doctrines of that much misunderstood and misrepresented philosopher. He and Menander are adequately and reasonably depicted.

Typhon, the hero of the tale, is a sulky and unmanageable son of opulent and cultured Athenian parents, admirers of Epicurus. Him they consult and he prescribes for the lad wanderings alone and afoot. Epicurus is represented as possessed of the formula for a magic liquid, four drops of which endow its drinker with the ability to hear the speech of all plants and to converse with them. With this he doses Typhon. The eight chapters intermediate between the opening and the close of the tale are named each for an adventure with some talking plant or tree.

The manners and customs of Hellas about 300 B. C. are vaguely adumbrated as a general background for the incidents of the story, but are mostly ignored in its details. The actual topography of Greece, Thessaly, and Epirus is made over into anything that suits the narrative; distances are shortened or lengthened as is convenient, mountains of any desired altitude or extent are set down wherever wanted; eucalyptus trees, native in Australia and not introduced into Greece until after 1854 are put there more than twenty-one centuries too early; so is a "perambulator" (the British appellation for a baby-carriage, an object inconceivable in ancient Greece). But this is a fantasia. In fact everything in it is totally unrelated to Greece at any epoch, it all happens in a land east of the sun and west of the moon, created for the author's purposes.

No strident anachronism jars on one, yet nothing in the book has anything to do with authentic Hellas at any date. At the period indicated a recalcitrant youth like Typhon would have taken to soldiering, which, in every age, until in our own wars have grown fewer and further between, has been the normal escape of hobbledehoys discontented at home. Typhon is no Greek, has nothing Greek about him, unless perhaps the good looks with which the author endows him. He is of the tribe of Maurice Hewlett's Senhouse and his kind: hand-made puppets fashioned to set forth their authors' nebulous notions of individual liberty; and, as such, he is singularly out of place in Hellenistic Greece, wherein, as in all the Greco-Roman world, the dominant, all-pervading racial axiom was that the individual existed for the state, not the state for the individual; that right conduct was approximate conformity to and wrong conduct noticeable divergence from what was expected of one by the community of which one was a member; that no one had any personal rights except after fulfilling his primary duties to his family, city, and state.

Nevertheless the book has an undeniable charm. The style is taking, easy, and soothing. It is comfortable to read of the hero chatting with birches, pines, and cypresses, rambling afoot through landscapes in which the best Devonshire and Greece mildly blend, among folk whose manners and customs intermingle those of modern Britain and ancient Hellas. It is all fantastic, but very engaging. Typhon runs to the blaze of a flaming hut of charcoal-burners in the mountains, and rescues from self-immolation in it with her incinerated parents their lovely daughter. She joins him in his roamings in a Paul and Virginia spirit incredible and impossible for any youth and maiden of Menander's Hellas, but, wholly modern and characteristically Anglo-Saxon as it is, made to seem both credible and natural in the realms of fantasia. His parents enthusiastically welcome her as a daughter-in-law, the more as an ancient oak has informed Typhon of incalculable treasures buried under his roots, which make Aigle the wealthiest bride in Greece. After reading the book an agreeable aroma of its atmosphere lingers in one's memory.

It is not clear what it is all about or why it was written. There is a flavor of satire in some of the utterances of the talking trees, and an air of satire about some of the minor characters, but it is not manifest against whom or what the possible satire may be directed. Mr. Phillpotts, in this book, irresistibly reminds one of Agib, Prince of Tartary, in the Bab Ballad, of whom Gilbert says:

His gentle spirit rolls,
In the melody of souls:
Which is pretty, but I don't know what it means.

A Racial Problem

GOD OF MIGHT. By ELIAS TOBENKIN. New York: Minton, Balch & Co. 1925. $2.

Reviewed by LOUIS KRONENBERG

THOUGH this book raises social and racial issues of striking contemporary interest, it gives no impression of having been written because the author felt an uncontrollable urge to get it out of his system. It is a book by a Jew dealing with Jewish problems, but it possesses that cool and impartial objectivity which elevates its subject-matter above thesis, and enables the reader to consider it in literary terms. It has the excellence of combining material with which the author is intimately familiar with a method void entirely of preconceptions and *partis pris*. And consequently, in presenting the problems of racial intermarriage and of the unassimilable Jew, it forces them to emerge from the characters; to be their problems as well as the problems of society.

"God of Might" tells of Samuel Waterman, who came to America from Russia when a boy, and settled in a small mid-western town where he was the only Jew. With Jewish influences removed and Gentile prejudices non-existent, he became almost wholly assimilated into American life. He was popular and successful; and when he married, he chose Jessie Grant, a Gentile aware of his origin,

From a drawing by the late C. Lovat Fraser for "Nursery Rhymes" (Holt).

but loving him as deeply as he loved her. But passing years brought to Lincoln an offensive Jewish colony, and Samuel's origin was revived and held slightly against him. Yet the real factor was himself, who could not, quite, be absorbed, who was sensitive, morbid, brooding. Though his wife's love and loyalty remained, he widened the narrow rift between him and his neighbors; and looking ahead, he could only see his children drawing away, his house dividing against itself. His brooding weakened him and refostered his Jewish instincts to the point of driving him to a synagogue, where we find him at the end, praying for strength to the God of Israel.

With the eye of a man always following the curve of an individual life, Mr. Tobenkin has mapped out this chronicle of Samuel Waterman in terms of admirable simplicity. If the book has none of those memorable scenes or moments of light which make a character seem like some one we know, it puts Samuel through enough honest experiences, it suffers to transpire enough emotions and thoughts, to particularize the man in three solid dimensions. In its clipped, economical way, it creates and exposes a man. And it never dodges his destiny, except that toward the end it steers his course with racial rather than personal emotions; and not quite inevitably. I know, to be sure, that Mr. Tobenkin consciously intended to show this persistence of race above all else. It illustrates the one point he wishes to make; that as he stands, the Jew will never quite assimilate, and that matters affecting his race can work on his brooding temperament and throw him back to precisely where he began. And in terms of the race, this is logical and sound. But in the case of Samuel, who felt no personal longings or *heimweh* for the old life, whose every part, save his instinctively racial part alone, was satisfied and happy in non-Jewish surroundings, this throw-back is entirely convincing only if we thrust aside the particularized individual, and substitute the almost impersonal instincts of race.

Yet this reversion serves to demonstrate admirably the two problems of the book: the Jew's inability for assimilation, and the question of intermarriage. For neither difficulty does Mr. Tobenkin juggle his art to find an answer; his merit lies, rather, in his lucid presentation of the facts. Perhaps he hints that, despite everything, it is nevertheless only through assimilation that the Jew can be saved. If Samuel could have been assimiliated, doubtless he would have been saved. But, granted almost ideal conditions, Samuel failed. And surely in our generation the problem is complicated by the instincts and social scheme of a second race; if a Jew were able to absorb himself in American life, he would still find fresh opposition from without.

Mr. Tobenkin treats of intermarriage as understandingly as I believe possible. His treatment of Samuel and Jessie is first and foremost a study of marriage rather than of intermarriage. He presents their personal, not their social, problems. It is really Samuel who forces the issue of intermarriage; who, by his brooding, imports into his married life its social significance. And by so doing, he manifestly forfeits the one solution. For if any egress from the difficulty exists, it lies in perceiving that social misalliances need not be personal ones. Assimilable or not, Samuel need not have failed in marriage if he had washed his hands of the social anomaly he and Jessie created. But, among other things, he did not perceive himself the victim of something more than just anti-semitism—the victim, really, of society's standards and the social tyranny.

Irreducible Gusto

GOLD BY GOLD. By HERBERT S. GORMAN. New York: Boni & Liveright. 1925. $2.50.

Reviewed by FLOYD DELL
Author of "This Mad Ideal"

THERE is an immense gusto, a real zest for the rich flavors of life, in this first novel of Herbert Gorman's. It perhaps exists most of all for its dramatic presentations of adventurous and unusual moments, moods, and personalities, which are exploited in a variety of ways,—often robustly comic, sometimes melodramatic, sometimes whimsical,—but always enthusiastically. It is in these accounts of detached moments that the book rises to its highest peaks of interest.

But there is a story holding these moments together—a story of the tragedy of a youth, who sacrifices everything to be a poet and then finds that he isn't one after all. This tragedy will no doubt be best appreciated by those who have—without perhaps making such sacrifices first—made the same painful discovery. To others it may very well seem a great fuss over nothing. It requires, in fact, a pious agreement with Mr. Gorman's implicit assumption—that to *be* a poet is worth any sacrifice—for us to see true tragedy in the career of the sick, scatter-brained, transcendental will-o'-the-wisp who is its hero: one must be capable of blaming for his débâcle, not his incidental manners and morals, but his essential lack of poetic capacity—otherwise the books might easily be read as a moral tract against young poets going to Greenwich Village.

Taken, however, even as a moral tract, it is a vastly amusing one: and I find in it, as the most obvious moral of all, one to which the author does not, in his passionate preoccupation with his hero's point of view, seem to attach enough importance—that even poets must have jobs in these days. Given any sort of job whatever, and granting everything else concerning Mr. Gorman's hero, it is quite possible that he might not have made such a mess of his life. It is only excessively idle people that try to swallow New York whole and get spiritual indigestion from it.

As is perhaps becoming in a biographer and dèvout admirer of James Joyce, Mr. Gorman has introduced into his book some quasi-Joycean effects. It must be said that they do not particularly hurt it, and sometimes help it along. These pyrotechnics serve also upon occasion to divert attention from Mr. Gorman's immaturity in dealing with char-

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acter: he sees it only in brilliant flashes; when he has learned to deal more calmly with people, he will not need to rely on these fireworks. And, though Mr. Gorman employs conscientiously some of the special tricks of "the master" in calling attention to, for a mild example, the dirt under people's finger-nails, his heart is not in it. The fact is that he is not disgusted with life at all, but in love with it. That, indeed, is what makes his book so unusually readable. Its final impression is one of beauty and—in spite of its tragic efforts—everyday delight in living. The pain and the (using the word in its literal sense) dirt, not being profoundly meant, fade out of one's memory, and only the beauty and the delight remain. Wasn't it Chesterton who remarked that we find ourselves humming to a merry tune Byron's lines: "There's not a joy the world can give like that it takes away"? Mr. Gorman's novel is a little like that!

Mass History

A HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE IN 1815. By ELIE HALVEY. With an Introduction by GRAHAM WALLAS. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1924. $6.00.

Reviewed by WILBUR CORTEZ ABBOTT
Harvard University

IT is not often that one is inclined to say that "here is a great book," but if he were, he would not be far wrong in saying it of this work of that experienced, judicious scholar and entertaining writer, M. Halévy. Nearly thirty years ago he published a study of the "Théorie Platonicinenne des Sciences." In 1901 he began a three volume study of the formation of philosophical radicalism, interrupting it with a little book on Thomas Hodgskin, one of the lesser known early "radicals." In 1912 he began this monumental history of the English people in the nineteenth century, of which he has published three volumes in French, the first of which is here translated under the somewhat peculiar title which it bears.

It may be hoped that the succeeding volumes will also be translated, that the work may be completed to the time originally announced—1895—or, better still, to 1914. For it is not merely a monument of scholarship, it is an extraordinarily entertaining work to any one interested in that interesting political and social phenomenon, the English people. To that study the present volume is, in appearance, only an introduction. It professes to describe the three great divisions of Political Institutions, Economic Life, and Religion and Culture in the three "Books" into which it is divided. It is packed with facts; it is knee-deep in footnotes; it has a fifty-page bibliography; and it would therefore seem peculiarly repellent to even a tolerably "intellectual" "general reader."

* * *

Yet nothing could be farther from the fact. It is, in the first place, far more than a mere catalogical description of the English people in 1815, for it endeavors to explain how and why they came to be what they were then, and in that process it surveys the field of their preceding history, especially in the eighteenth century. In the next place, though it derives its material from a list of sources whose very contemplation is enough to discourage the energy of hardened scholarly workers when they reflect on what it has meant to go through these documents, extract from them their important information, and to digest it into history; though it has within its pages a mass of facts,—a mountain of fact, a very mountain-chain of facts,—incredible as it may seem, one is not oppressed by them. Indeed he grows interested in them; he reads on and on through them with no sense of exhaustion. For they have been conquered, ordered, organized, arranged, drilled, and disciplined by a master. They have not overpowered him, as is the way of facts in the case of too many historians. They are marshalled and marched in the direction which he sets. They are subordinated to his purposes. In consequence he has provided not an encyclopædia but a history.

It is a history very different from much that has gone before. It is in the truest and best sense, mass-history. Its hero is the people, not even its statesmen, much less its politicians. Its subject is the development of that people. Its essence is what you may call "psychology" or "ideas" or "consciousness" or "movements," or even "soul." It is concerned with external manifestations of that "spirit" in the form of events but merely as manifestations. It is the thing behind the apparent "facts" which interests M. Halévy; it is the greatest fact of all with which he is concerned, the fact of the development of a people. For he has a mind, not merely a memory or a mass of notes, with which he writes his history; and a historical mind is a rare and precious thing. It does not always exist, even among professed historians; and it is not always used by them even where it does exist.

Reviewers will undoubtedly seize upon the extraordinary description of eighteenth century Anglicanism and the Methodist revival, of the influence of the Dissenters, as a peculiarly apt expression of the book's method and purpose, of this effort not merely to know but to understand history. But the chapters on economic life will interest and instruct many no less, perhaps more, than those on religious experiences. That study and its conclusions may profitably be compared with the work of the Hammonds for more reasons than one, but for one most of all; it is preëminently scientific, not polemic. It does not seek to make a case. It takes in all the evidence and passes a judicial not a partisan judgment. And it is filled with entertaining observations.

We have heard much of late of "the new history," a history which too often does not trouble too much with facts, but is concerned with doctrines, or "ideas," or opinions, or mere dogma, an "open mind," a "forward-looking" attitude. It has been assumed that facts and ideas are somehow incompatible. But if we are to have a "new history," let us have this kind, where ideas are based on knowledge. It is at least as interesting, and it has one enormous advantage—it faces the facts.

Artist and Humanitarian

THE LETTERS OF OLIVE SCHREINER. Edited by S. C. CRONWRIGHT-SCHREINER. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1924. $5.

Reviewed by AMY WELLINGTON

ONE closes this large volume of Olive Schreiner's letters, profoundly interested, yet troubled and doubtful. Would Olive Schreiner have given her consent to the publication of her most private thoughts and feelings? There are certain notes to Havelock Ellis which it seems almost a sacrilege to print. Did she foresee this danger? In 1917, we are told, Olive Schreiner began to insist, with tears and at the risk of breaking a thirty-three years' friendship, that Ellis should either destroy or return her portion of their correspondence. He burnt the later letters. Did she sanction the publication of the earlier and probably more unguarded ones?

Mr. Cronwright-Schreiner says that in writing his biography and in making this selection of extracts from thousands of his wife's letters, he has been guided, not only by "loving interest and tender devotion," but by a "reverential scientific ardor." Possibly, here is the cause of his most injurious blunders. For to study your closest and dearest with "scientific ardor" is a task before which both scientist and writer usually quail. Some say it cannot be done. It certainly requires an extraordinary degree of disinterestedness and personal detachment, qualities which the present editor and biographer does not conspicuously possess. Plain sympathy and understanding would, one thinks, have served him better.

It was a "little Boer school-teacher" (so she described herself), teaching five hours a day and at her books till ten or eleven at night, who found time to write "The Story of an African Farm." There is a fiction which persists even to this day (it was printed in Mr. Squire's *London Mercury* after Olive Schreiner's death) that Meredith revised the novel for publication. "It cuts me deep," wrote Olive Schreiner to Havelock Ellis when first she heard the story in 1890.

> I think nothing in life has ever cut me so deep—I wish you would write to Mr. Meredith, and I am sure he will give you permission—to say *it is a lie*—I know it seems little to you, but the best and most loved book I have ever written I would throw into the fire if any human being—were to add not one sentence but one word to it.—I think Meredith will understand this, even if you don't. He is the only man in England who has given a blind, life-long devotion to his art, careless where it leads.

Olive Schreiner met Meredith only once, for a few minutes, in the office of Chapman & Hall, and she did not know he was the author of "Diana" until several years later. He was introduced to her as the firm's reader; but they did not mention the contents of her book. He gave her the advice (too late!) to be cautious in all business transactions with her publishers. "The Story of an African Farm" was printed exactly as the author wrote it.

* * *

For Olive Schreiner was a most exacting artist in her stories and allegories. Throughout her life, there were two great impulses, sometimes at war, within her,—the humanitarian and the artistic. Her social and political interests did not hurt, they only strengthened and deepened "Dreams" and "Trooper Peter Halket," but they prevented her from writing a South African epic. There was a division in her work. She was capable of such a torrent of political oratory as that letter (happily included in the appendix to this volume) read at a Cape Town meeting in war-time; and she could dip her pen in beautiful, glowing colors and, with utmost economy of words, set down "Dreams." She, herself, was perfectly aware of this division.

Olive Schreiner lived in or near London for six years following the publication of "The Story of an African Farm," part of that amazing "sunrise" in English social thought and action of the 1880's. She was always poor, never really well. From the age of fifteen, she had suffered increasingly from asthma. Social revolt distracted her from the novel she was trying to complete, "From Man to Man," which Mr. Cronwright-Schreiner now promises to publish. The servile, torturing life of woman was the subject of absorbing interest. She wrote "ferociously" on prostitution. A free-thinker, in profound reaction from traditional religion, yet profoundly religious (a true daughter of Gottlob Schrein, the German missionary), her life was full of contradictions. Solitary, celibate, living in the midst of every kind of sex theory and adventure, she wrote, after a refusal to marry: "I *must* be free—I must be *free*—I've been free all my life.—Oh, they can't cut my wings." Yet, at the same time, she was "more and more" convinced that "no kind of sex relationship can be good and pure but marriage." The monogamous ideal strengthened with the years. She encountered all the difficulties, tragic and absurd, of the solitary woman living in Victorian London. Many of her "dreams" were written in Italy—in Alassio, where she felt most happy, and in Paris where she felt most alien and free.

So the story of a great and unconventional life continues in these letters; the return to South Africa, marriage, the death at birth of an only child, absorption in South African politics. Olive Schreiner became, as one of her countrymen truly put it, "a national possession for all South Africa." Unconditionally pro-Boer, and held a prisoner by the English through part of the Boer War, her home looted, her manuscripts destroyed, no sooner was the war ended than she began to feel that the Boers no longer needed her. The old love and inclination turned her towards England. (She was part English by birth, wholly English in culture.)

The author of "Woman and Labor" lived in London from 1914 to 1918, a pacifist with a German name, alienating friends, persecuted by the ignorant, poor, solitary, and an invalid. Life had become for her an almost continuous struggle to breathe. Still, she remained intensely alive to all the great social and political issues, and with poetic genius unspent. She died shortly after her return to South Africa in 1920. One is glad that Olive Schreiner lived to see the beginning of woman's freedom, she who visioned, with such poetic beauty, the end.

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Literary Independence

(*Continued from page* 642)

unless our youngest generation decides not to go excavating for Troys in our still rather shallow past. Perhaps our younger generation has found that an age which must be rescued from columns of vulgar writing and pages of vulgar photographs resists them almost as tenaciously as trousers resist sculpture, and perhaps, instead of following Henry James across the sea, they are cherishing the idea that all the ages which have been laid away have been laid away in lavender, or in myrrh and frankincense. "Linda Condon" is almost the only novel which could possibly be called a successful effort to make a work of art with our modern American life as its model, and Linda Condon herself is hardly more than a beautifully finished paper doll with three frocks and one perfect hat, who must be surveyed only from the front. And when our youngest generation realizes that the characters in our novels who have three dimensions have usually been drawn from a mirrored reflection, and that those reflections are usually surrounded by paper dolls who have not always three frocks, they must surely discover the impossibility of reproducing the minds of two or three centuries ago, even if they cannot look into "Romola" and see that Benvenuto Cellini made the labors of George Eliot unnecessary and the labors of her readers ridiculous. And then they will have only to discover that there are charming people and charming places in America, and that there are even charming relations between people, and that there are spinsters quite as depraved as Cousine Bette and students not much less wretched than Raskolnikov, and that there are whole countrysides of Emma Bovarys and towns full of Sir Willoughby Patternes. There are even Elizabeth Bennets and there are hundreds of Candides—but there are not any Jane Austens and there is not quite one Voltaire, though perhaps we need only three things to produce them, and to prove the advantages of a land where no one is sufficiently convinced of his low estate to feel it a justification of bad manners and bad clothes and bad grammar, and where very few people are sufficiently convinced of their high estate to feel it a justification of exactly the same attributes.

Perhaps, with just time enough for two more younger generations, we may celebrate the second centennial of our separate and equal station with a whole library of the literary form which must always be the fine flower of a civilization—perhaps we may prove again that a self-made nation can survive long enough to triumph over the disabilities a self-made man has never yet lived down. We need only schoolmasters and schoolmistresses who will know genius in its infancy, and who will forbid it to read the homespun prose of Cooper and Mark Twain, the cotton prose of Dickens and Scott and George Eliot, and the mercerized prose of Sinclair Lewis—schoolmasters and schoolmistresses who will realize that the brains of Americans are in much greater danger than their morals. And librarians who will also realize that self-evident truth, and who will hide away "Ivanhoe" and "Our Mutual Friend" and "The Rise of Silas Lapham," and bring them out only for those persons whom a careful intelligence test proves incapable of understanding "Tristram Shandy" or the introduction to "The Egoist." And more critics whose limitations will not be the limitations of their subjects, who will know first drafts when they see them, who will recognize imitations and even influences, and who will demand at least a respectable mediocrity before they compare novelists with Tolstoy and Anatole France and playwrights with Sophocles and Ibsen.

The Return of Harlequin

(*Continued from page* 641)

ious scavenging of realism, these developments meet us at every turn. Artifice and artificiality have danced in upon the heels of waddling Naturalism, that sweating and heaving behemoth. We can welcome Harlequin once more,—aye, even when he thumbs a knife for our vitals behind his brightly-lozenged back. We can better bear today the cut and thrust of flashing, malicious satire than any more bludgeonings at present from the profoundly "significant writers." For fantasy too, is significant, in a more real sense. A pin can puncture a balloon, and against our gaseous modern buncombe it is not entirely necessary to muster cannon and battering-rams.

The BOWLING GREEN

Bertha and Her Pottage

OF course there must have been others also for whom the word *Brooklyn* has always been a gramaryl and a spell. Probably it was Walt Whitman who long ago cast a magic over that name, so that not Stratford, Stoke Poges, Weimar, Valley Forge, Walden,—not even Cockeysville, Md., where the Sherwood rye used to be distilled—none of the traditional shrines had a livelier music in my skull. Since then some of the most unawaited excitements have transpired for me in that borough which Mr. Lawton Mackall ungallantly called the butt end of Long Island. And my actual entry into Brooklyn is demurely associated with what I thought was the discovery of the amazing literary merit of Bertha M. Clay. (I wonder what the M. stood for?)

It was a day, then, much like this; a drowsy forenoon of early spring; and calm Brooklyn byways whose names I have forgotten, perhaps they had none, lay mild and yellow. I had been sent by a publishing house to collect information, for publicity purposes, about one of its authors who had died. The author (I can see very plainly the picture of him we used, again and again, it was the only one we had, in our broadsheets sent out to the press; his moustache was finely waxed) was an Englishman, but he had a kinsman who lived in Brooklyn. From this kinsman, a veterinary surgeon, I was to glean some biographical details. It is a bit vague in my mind, but I remember that near the house was a stable or some sort of quadruped dispensary and the doctor and I sat in a pleasant whiff of strong nostra and horse. There was a glass of beer somewhere in the picture, very cool and pleasant beer, blonde like so much of Brooklyn's charm, and in the conversation I learned that the vanished author had been one of those who wrote the novels signed with the great name of Bertha M. Clay.

This may or may not have been exact; but young men in the publicity professions are not gruesomely concerned with doctrines on the fallibilty of human transmission. In any case it was a good "item" and I knew that my boss would be pleased. And I resolved to make the acquaintance of Miss Clay's works.

This was not immediately easy, but one day I found myself in the neighborhood of Ninth Avenue and 28th Street (Manhattan). This time I believe I was on some errand for the editor of the *Garden Magazine*, something to do with a flower show, and the wholesale florists were along West 28th. You have no idea, incidentally, how many quaint errands are devised to keep active and alert the young apprentices of the publishing business. In a stationery shop on Ninth Avenue I found a fine display of Bertha Clays. I bought one, perhaps, "The Shadow of a Sin" or "Thrown on the World," though I admit that Charles Garvice and Charlotte Braeme had more skill in titles. Why didn't I buy "Neither Maid, Wife, nor Widow?" The title has haunted me ever since. For the conclusion was irresistible, she must have been a Cartesian, as Mr. Clem Hawley would say. In that region there is a park, whose name escapes me; and there I sat on a bench reading my first Bertha Clay. I rapidly came to the conclusion that it was dull twaddle, and left it on the seat.

* * *

We now skip several years. One evening, in a ten-cent store in Hempstead, L. I., I found a lot more Bertha Clays and determined to have another try. The volume I chose, at random, was "A Dead Heart;" The Arthur Westbrook Company, Cleveland, U. S. A., publishers; postage stamps taken the same as money. "A Dead Heart" was there, sure enough, but it was followed by another tale printed in much larger type, and I tackled the second one first. By the time I had read three or four paragraphs I got up from the couch in excitement. I've done Bertha an injustice, I said. There's something to her after all. Why, she's kidding them!

The story was about a young Scot, a graduate in theology and logic (only a Scot could graduate in both these simultaneously) who went to London to look for a job. He wanted to be private secretary to a member of the Cabinet and "if time permitted he proposed writing for the press." He says goodbye to his Scotch sweetheart. "Andrew did not open the door for her, for he was a Scotch graduate. Besides, she might one day be his wife." The girl is briefly described. "Clarrie was beautiful and all that." Their parting:—

"Andrew stooped and kissed her upturned face.

"'If a herring and a half,' he said anxiously, 'cost three half-pence, how many will you get for eleven pence?'

"Clarrie was mute."

With growing enthusiasm I continued. Andrew, the hero, goes to London. "It was the first time he had set foot in England, and he naturally thought of Bannockburn." Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Chamberlain were too busy to see him, and he became embittered. He tried journalism:—

He sent one of the finest things that was ever written on the Ontology of Being to paper after paper, and it was never used. He threatened the *Times* with legal proceedings if it did not return the manuscript.

The *Standard* sent him somebody else's manuscript, and seemed to think it would do as well.

A certain amazement was taking hold of me as I scoured through these witty pages. Good heavens, here was Bertha Clay, whom I had regarded as a mere caterer of plum duff, turning off this graceful and highbrow burlesque. I felt I owed Bertha an apology.

Andrew was reduced to rereading his testimonials for consolation. He had a sheaf of them, from the Rev. Peter Mackay of Dundee and many other Scottish logicians and divines. "Had you met him in the Strand conning them over, you might have taken him for an actor. He had a yearning to stop strangers in the streets and try a testimonial's effect on them." "He had two pounds with him when he came to London, and in a month they had almost gone." He took to writing obits:—

When the newspaper placards announced the serious illness of a distinguished man, he made up characteristic anecdotes about his childhood, his reputation at school, his first love, and sent them, as the reminscences of a friend, to the great London dailies. These were the only things of his they used. As often as not, the invalid got better, and then Andrew went without a dinner.

In his despair our Andrew joins the S. D. W. S. P.—the Society for Doing Without Some People—and earns a modest living by helping to assasinate public figures who have proved wearisome, to the members of this excellent club. The only personages exempt from possible removal are those who have been elected honorary members. The first man of any note that Andrew dispatched with his own hands was "*Punch's* favorite artist on Scotch matters." He was on the track of the man who signs himself *Paterfamilias* in letters to the *Times*. To his great pleasure he learned that "none of these American preachers who come over to this country are honorary members."

* * *

Well, as you see, by this time I felt it was too good to be true. I was carrying Bertha Clay round with me and expounding her as an unappreciated satirist. I went in to see a connoisseur of such matters. "Have you ever read Bertha Clay?" I asked. "She's immense." I read him some of it.

"What's it called?" he asked.

"It's called 'Better Dead,' it's the second story in this book 'A Dead Heart.' The great thing about Bertha seems to be her versatility. It's totally different from the first story."

"Bertha Clay!" he shouted. "Better Dead"! Why, you fathead, do you know what that is? It's Barrie's first book, published in '88. This is probably the first American edition, pirated. Darned valuable as a curiosity. Can you get me a copy?"

I went back to the ten-cent store. The counter where Bertha had reigned was devoted to Easter eggs.

"I'm sorry," said the young woman, "they were taken off sale last week. There's not much call for literature here."

But I often wonder what the readers of "A Dead Heart" can possibly make of that little skit of Barrie's when they find it masquerading under the name of Bertha M. Clay. And in the same volume, at the very end (just before the advertisement of "Napoleon's Oraculum") you'll find a yarn called "My Own True Ghost Story," written by a young man in Allahabad. But that also goes in as one of Bertha's. I begin to understand why so many people, including the Arthur Westbrook Company, regard Bertha as a great writer.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

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Books of Special Interest

Chekhov Letters

LETTERS ON THE SHORT STORY, THE DRAMA, AND OTHER LITERARY TOPICS. By ANTON CHEKHOV. Selected and edited by LOUIS S. FRIEDLAND. New York: Minton, Balch & Co. 1924. $4.

Reviewed by LEO WIENER
Harvard University

LETTERS of a great writer have not only a fascination as giving an insight into his inner life, which is generally disguised in his literary works, but they also throw a flood of light upon many activities connected with his authorship, which otherwise would remain hidden from the reader's view and would distort the actual facts into wrong perspectives. In the first case a well-chosen selection, especially in a translation from a foreign tongue, easily accomplishes its purpose. Thus, Mrs. Garnett's admirable selection from the six volumes of Chekhov's letters, which appeared in 1920, fully satisfies the reader's curiosity. Apparently Mr. Friedland wanted to do justice to the scholar's desire for documentary proof in issuing the present volume, in which a larger amount of material is brought together. It remains for the critic to ascertain how he has acquitted himself of his task.

The constant solecisms in Mr. Friedland's translations do not raise any hope that the renderings are exact or even correct. Moscowite for Muscovite, Sokolonits for Sokolinets, Russkoye Bogatsvo and Russkaya Bogatsyo for Russkoe Bogatstvo, Lvo and Lvov for Lev (Tolstoy's son), kalie bromatie for potassium bromide, etc., are irritating enough. His worst offence is quoting Mrs. Garnett's translation *in toto*, without even once giving her credit for the text. Such passages may be found, with an occasional change of a word, on pp. 10, 11, 16, 19, 20, 21, 24, 27, 29, 35, 40, and so forth. The following passage from p. 11 in Mr. Friedland's book as compared with Mrs. Garnett's translation, will illustrate his method:

Mrs. Garnett's Translation	*Mr. Friedland's Translation*
"I begin a story on September 10th with the thought that I must finish it by October 5th at the latest; if I don't I shall fail the editor and be left without money. I let myself go at the beginning and write with an easy mind; but by the time I get to the middle I begin to grow timid and to fear that my story will be too long: I have to remember that the *Syeverny Vyestnik* has not much money, and that I am one of their expensive contributors. This is why the beginning of my stories is always very promising and looks as though I were starting on a novel, the middle is huddled and timid, and the end is, as in a short sketch, like fireworks. And so in planning a story one is bound to think first about its frame-work: from a crowd of leading or subordinate characters one selects one person only—wife or husband; one puts him on the canvas and paints him alone, making him prominent, while the others one scatters over the canvas like small coin, and the result is something like the vault of heaven: one big moon and a number of very small stars around it. But the moon is not a success, because it can only be understood if the stars too are intelligible, and the stars are not worked out. And so what I produce is not literature, but something like the patching of Trishka's coat. What am I to do? I don't know, I don't know. I must trust to time which heals all things."	"I begin a story on September 10th with the thought that I must finish it by October 5th at the latest; if I don't I shall fail the editor and be left without money. I let myself go at the beginning and write with an easy mind; but by the time I get to the middle I begin to grow timid and to fear that my story will be too long: I have to remember that the *Sieverny Viestnik* has not much money, and that I am one of their expensive contributors. This is why the beginning of my stories is always very promising and looks as though I were starting on a novel, the middle is huddled and timid, and the end is, as in a short sketch, like fireworks. And so in planning a story one is bound to think first about its frame-work: from a crowd of leading or subordinate characters one selects one person only—wife or husband; one puts him on the canvas and paints him alone, making him prominent, while the others one scatters over the canvas like small coin, and the result is something like the vault of heaven: one big moon and a number of very small stars around it. But the moon is not a success, because it can only be understood if the stars too are intelligible, and the stars are not worked out. And so what I produce is not literature, but something like the patching of Trishka's coat. What am I to do? I don't know, I don't know. I must trust to time which heals all things."

One cannot condemn Mr. Friedland too much for the literary atrocities perpetrated by him.

*A letter by the author of this volume replying to the reviewer's criticism will be found on page 654.

On India

ETHICS OF INDIA. By E. WASHBURN HOPKINS. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1924. $3.

Reviewed by KENNETH SAUNDERS

IT is strange that the Western world has had to wait so long for books upon so great and important a topic. And now almost simultaneously have appeared two books, "Hindu Ethics," by Dr. McKenzie of Bombay, and "Ethics of India," by Professor Hopkins of Yale; the latter tells us that he had claimed to be the first in this field only to discover that Professor McKenzie's volume was already out. The books are written from a somewhat different point of view. "Hindu Ethics," a member of the well-known Quest of India Series, has a missionary purpose, and while it seeks to be fair is much more critical than "Ethics of India." This is in a sense a continuation of Dr. Hopkins's well-known "Religions of India," and follows the same historical method. It traces the development of Indian ethical ideals from the Rig Veda to modern days and shows how much more ethical content Indian religion has than is usually recognized. In a concluding chapter he attempts to evaluate some of these, and deals specially with India's challenge to the Western world in her great doctrine of Ahimsa, now voiced by Mr. Gandhi. He holds that Hindu ethics surpasses that of the West in its compassionate spirit towards bird and beast and even towards the plant world.

And we, who are only beginning to hear that trees and flowers have life and feeling comparable in weak degree to our own, and condone, if we do not inflict, so much of the misery suffered by dumb animals, may properly, as we learn to be less cruel, turn back with some humility to the time long before the Christian era, when so good and perfect a doctrine was not only preached as an ethical ideal but was accepted by millions of people as the normal rule of life for every good man, and confess that, however excellent our ethics may be, India has taught us something better than we know.

If this is true in the sphere of plants and animals how much more true is it in that of men. Today when it is regarded as a dangerous doctrine in the West the essentially Christian teaching of the power of love and of the duty of non-resistance is being embodied in a movement which is shaking all India and arresting attention everywhere.

The new books for the Spring are already beginning to appear. Buy them as they are published and spread the pleasure of reading them over a longer period of time.

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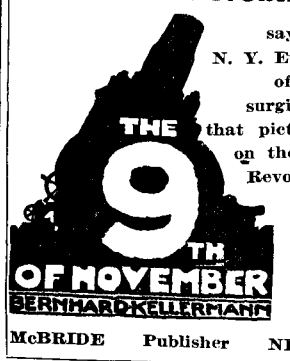

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A Letter from England

By EDWIN MUIR

THE English novel has been showing more and more diversity in the last two or three years. There are no longer streams of tendency as there were in the time—now apparently buried—of Mr. Wells, Mr. Bennett, and Mr. Galsworthy. On the contrary, we see the spectacle, hard to credit, of innumerable tributaries and no river. In other words, there are many artists wandering in lonely byways, but no main road. These artists at intervals appear surprisingly out of the void and pass unaccountably into a future which may with equal plausibility be the disguised shape of oblivion or of fame. We simply cannot tell. There are novelists like Mr. Lawrence, so individual that they can have few imitators and no colleagues. There is Mr. David Garnett, whose field is so narrow that two in it would be a crowd. There is Mr. T. F. Powys, as narrow as Mr. Garnett, more peculiar than Mr. Lawrence, and in himself forbidding enough to scare away the most hardened of those who insist on being influenced. There are Mr. E. M. Forster and Mr. Stephen Hudson, masters of their *métiers* and therefore in no danger of being imitated. There is Mrs. Virginia Woolf, a very fine intelligence and a very intelligent sensibility, whom writers lacking her rare fusion of gifts will imitate at their peril. These writers do not swim in the same stream of tendency, and none of them incarnates "the modern consciousness" as Mr. Wells did for a little twenty years ago. There is indeed only one writer of accredited rank in England in a stream. That is Mr. Aldous Huxley, who if he does not incarnate the modern consciousness at least incarnates something modern: an attitude, a pose, or it may be a necessity of the mind. He alone of the more considerable figures writes in the same vein as a great number of writers in England all inferior to him and as a small number of writers in France who are his superiors. But one can hardly take these writers seriously, whether they are represented by Mr. Huxley or by Paul Morand. Mr. Huxley himself—if he can be separated from almost everything he has written yet—one can take seriously on account of his admitted gifts, chief of which is a graceful style. But what he says, describes, implies—his whole attitude to existence—is so senseless if it is genuine and so pointless if it is not that there is a sort of charlatanry in admiring it, as several young writers and old critics seem to do. The modern attitude of smart disillusion and up-to-date despair is not unlike the spurious romanticism of a century ago. Modify Mr. Huxley a little and he has a remarkable resemblance to Alfred de Musset. He "scorns" life as the romantics did, only in different phrases, and he cannot be exempted from the charge of trying to work all his reactions, disagreeable as well as agreeable, into a picturesque pose. But what value has that pose? And what relevance has it to art? The relevance which de Musset's romanticism had to his poetry. It made poetry fashionable for a time, and unfashionable ever since.

Several of the chief English novelists have published new works this year. There has been Mr. Huxley's "Those Barren Leaves." Mr. T. F. Powys is represented by a novel, "Mr. Tasker's Gods," in which the leaves are still more barren than Mr. Huxley's and the fruit more bitter. Mr. J. D. Beresford has repeated himself very conscientiously in "The Monkey Puzzle." Mr. Stephen Hudson's "Myrtle" has appeared, the most beautiful achievement thus far of his fine and economical art. In addition there have been two considerable novels by new writers. Mr. Geoffrey Dennis, whose "Mary Lee" made a stir in 1922, has followed it with "Harvest in Poland," which will probably make even a bigger stir, though its very considerable merits are not chiefly literary. Far more interesting as well as far quieter is Miss Marjory Strachey's first novel. It is entitled "The Nightingale" and it is an imaginative reconstruction of the life of Chopin. The theme is obviously difficult. One can imagine the life of Chopin being treated with the devastating sentimentality which English writers seldom avoid in approaching such themes, the sentimentality, for example, which makes unreadable every criticism, long or short, written on Francis Thompson. One can imagine it, again, being treated with that light English satire which is almost always too heavy and almost never wise. Miss Strachey avoids both sentimentality and satire: she renders the romance of Chopin's life, surroundings, thoughts, while strictly avoiding the romantic. She shows a rare sympathy, a rare objectivity. The description of the composer's early life is firm and beautiful; the scenes at Nahant between Chopin and George Sand's son, the interiors of that queer and sordid household, are full of unflinching truth and economy. And the final scene is not merely very skillful in what it omits; it is intensely moving. Miss Strachey is not so good in her love scenes; she is at her best in describing the first and the last years of Chopin's life, his years of almost pure happiness and almost unalleviated suffering. Throughout she sticks closely to the actual story of Chopin's life; and like M. Maurois's "Ariel" the book is both novel and biography. There are great possibilities in this new field for the novel, and, it is not unpleasant to think, great dangers. None but writers with a certain minimum of intelligence will be able to undertake, the *métier*.

Of Mr. Dennis's novel, "Harvest in Poland," it is difficult to write. The author has not acquired any command over his art; he is full of tricks and devoid of technique; he writes very well, very badly, and always too much; and he is consistently melodramatic, a sure sign of a failure in artistic expression. But he has imagination; he sees life originally, though not so originally as he tries to make out; and one or two of the characters in the novel are real creations on the border-line between life and fantasy. The horrible and fascinating Sebastyan is magnificently imagined. If the novel were on the plane of art it might conceivably be great art. But it is not on that plane. There is Mr. Dennis's stiff problem.

The last novel of note—Mr. Hudson's "Myrtle"—is also the best. It is Mr. Hudson's fifth book, but it is in no sense a repetition. Each of this author's novels has had a separate form, has been the solution of a fresh artistic problem. The articulation of each has been determined by the problem; the novel has been the concrete answer to that. It has been, in other words, an æsthetic creation; the question has been answered on the plane of art: the novel has had an æsthetic necessity—and that is a rare thing for an English novel to have. For when the æsthetic quality is present in a novel it means not merely that a segment of life is being faithfully described, but that the presentation has an interior unity, that the novel is a world the forces of which alone create the characters and destinies of the figures in it, their actions, reactions, interests, everything. This world is autonomous and complete; the characters do not stray into it from the actual world, as, for example, Mr. Huxley's characters do; nor are they concerned with specific problems carried over from the actual world, as Mr. Galsworthy's characters are. They live in this completely evoked world of art; they are a permanent part of it. It may be said of Mr. Hudson's characters that they do this. His novels are æsthetically realized.

Thus it is almost impossible to write of the state of the novel in England today. The novel has no type at present and it is not in one state but in several. Seen from one angle the position seems hopeless. The conventional realistic novel, psycho-analytical or not, with or without sociology, has been turned out for such a long time and in such abundance that there seems no meaning in turning it out any longer. Mr. Lawrence's very exciting books are hardly contributions to the novel; they open no new doors, though they have broken most of the windows. Mr. Huxley, having begun as an original variation, has made up his mind to vary no more. Mr. Garnett writes of animals in eighteenth century prose, and does it excellently. The picture could be enlarged—but that is the English novel today. It seems to be advancing in all directions; it has no leader; it has attained no synthesis, and there is probably nobody living who could synthesize it. The most encouraging sign in all this anarchy is that more and more attention is being given to the æsthetic side of the novel. By their themes, their style, their vein of inhumanity, Mr. David Garnett's stories, for example, are made to rely, as no stories have relied in England for a long time, on their æsthetic appeal. Mr. Hudson's appeal, too, is chiefly æsthetic. And one could mention three or four other names, without dragging in "Ulysses" (certainly the grand feat of our generation), which has had very little influence on the English novel. At any rate, the sociological-psychological novel is dead. Although it is still being written, it has been found out.

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Foreign Literature

MECHTILD LICHNOWSKY

GŒTTER, KŒNIGE UND TIERE IN IN AEGYPTEN. By MECHTILD LICHNOWSKY. Munich: Kurt Wolff.

DAS SPIEL MIT DEM TOD. The same.

GOTT BETET. The same.

DER STIMMER. The same.

GEBURT. By MECHTILD LICHNOWSKY. Berlin: Erich Reiss.

DER KAMPF MIT DEM FACHMANN. By MECHTILD LICHNOWSKY. Vienna: Buchhandlung Richard Lanyi.

Reviewed by A. W. G. RANDALL

MECHTILD LICHNOWSKY is known outside Germany as the wife of a famous Ambassador, that Prince Lichnowsky who was accredited to the Court of Saint James at the outbreak of the War and later made such sensational revelations and assertions in his diary. In her own country, however, she is quite as well known on her own account as on account of her husband, for some years ago she made herself prominent in the ranks of the younger poets, and has considerably added to her reputation by her subsequent books.

Princess Lichnowsky's first published work was a volume of sketches of a holiday in Egypt, well illustrated by photographs and drawings by herself. This was in 1913, but already the gift for vivid description and witty, subtle observation which was to distinguish her later books is apparent. In 1915 Princess Lichnowsky turned to drama and produced her "Spiel vom Tod," described as "nine pictures for marionettes." It is really a series of allegories of the essential beneficence of Death, with some beautiful poetical passages, and certain passages of light relief. The following year Princess Lichnowsky produced a volume of prose-poems, "Gott Betet," a series of monologues in which the Creator apostrophises his creature. The mysticism and obscure symbolism of both play and poems caused Princess Lichnowsky to be numbered with the "Expressionist" school and, so far as that vague and all-too-comprehensive label—as generally used—meant that there was a tendency in her imagination to get away from mere externals, from the impressions of things, the description sufficed. But that Princess Lichnowsky had none of the deliberate eccentricity or forced rhetoric often associated with German "Expressionists" was soon shown in her story, "Der Stimmer." There can be few books more difficult to review in short space than this simple but profoundly subtle and penetrating little novel, which tells the story, or rather uncovers the soul, of a humble, despised piano-tuner who, within, is a perfect artist, passionately devoted to music but denied the opportunity of making himself technically proficient. All the pathos of frustrated artistic genius is in this novel.

"Geburt" is a much longer work and treats a wider theme, the gradual awakening of a boy of twenty to intellectual ideas, to love, to spiritual reflection. As briefly summarized thus, the story sounds banal, but Princess Lichnowsky's treatment of the subject is remarkably fresh and original. How acute a penetration she has into the boy's mind, into the mind of Vewi, the girl he vainly falls in love with; how apparently artless, and yet how essential to this revivifying of an old theme, the abrupt asides she puts into the mouths of her characters or interpolates herself—something of the technique employed by James Joyce in "Ulysses," but with much more restraint, much more sparingly. Those who like the "straight-through" novel of character or history and tolerate with difficulty anything which departs from the general run of description mingled with dialogue, will turn from "Geburt" and label it "obscure" or, as certain German critics have done, "Expressionistic," as if that label killed. But anyone with an interest in the renewal of the art of fiction will see in Princess Lichnowsky's latest novel a useful and interesting experiment.

"Der Kampf mit dem Fachmann"—how are we to render the full flavor of the phrase? It is a series of witty reflections on and imaginary conversations with that type of "expert" who sets himself up against "lay" opinion and dogmatizes with the most unshakable self-complacency about subjects on which superior knowledge is often of far less use than a little common sense. It is, as Princess Lichnowsky explains, the antithesis between "a thinking person and a dogmatist, between a clever child and a stupid adult, between a gifted scholar and a crazy schoolmaster." And in giving examples of the "fight with the expert" Princess Lichnowsky displays such humor, such a keen eye for individual peculiarity as to encourage the hope that her next work may be a humorous play of character or a novel of social satire such as few in Germany today are as well qualified as she is to write.

Foreign Notes

GERMANY publishes each year approximately the same number of books that are brought out annually in England, France, and the United States combined What the sixty million Germans read is, consequently, a question of some importance. A month ago, *Nimm und Lies!* ("Take and Read!") that quite lusty even if youthful monthly—it is now in its third year—sent out a questionnaire with the idea of securing reliable information on this point. The replies totaled 750, which is rather remarkable in view of the fact that a reply obligated the remitter to remit. These 750 readers voted for 373 different books. In this we see the Germans running true to form: where two or three of them are gathered together there are two or three different opinions.

The work most frequently demanded was Hermann Löns's posthumous "Gendanken und Gestalten" ("Thoughts and Figures"). Attached to this is obviously a measure of retrospective sentimentality. Löns is a combination of Joyce Kilmer and Rupert Brooks without being either of them. He was killed at the front at the very beginning of the war and though he left but three slender volumes of rather vague outdoorism, there has come into being a regular Löns cult. Second to him ranked, oddly enough, Gustav Freytag's "Bilder aus der Deutschen Vergangenheit" ("Pictures from the German Past"). This is odd, for Freytag and Löns are poles removed from each other at every point and from every point of view. Freytag is about as sensible a person as ever wrote in the German language. Romanticism he knew not; for realism he did not seem to care; nor was he a rationalist. He was a plain man of the people who advised the Germans, at every opportunity that he could call into being, to work. It is hardly this phase of his output however, that is attracting the Germans of today; it would seem, rather, at this distance that they scent something alluring in the very title of his old book (1862): pictures from Germany's past.

Other works that received "quite a number of votes" are: Alfred Lichtmark's "Reisebriefe," Emil Ludwig's "Genie und Character," Maximilian Harden's "Köpfe," Ernst Fuhrmann's "Geschichte der Germanen," and—of course—Rudolf Herzog's last bit of fictionized popularity, "Wieland der Schmied," a novel that tells—of course—*a corking good love story, revives the old* Germanic legend of Wieland the Smith and ties this in with French occupation of the Ruhr. As to all the other books that were voted for, there are but two whose authors have ever been heard of on this side of the Atlantic: Sven Hedin's "From Pekin to Moscow" and Wilhelm Raabe's "Abu Telfan."

Had there been anything regional in the way this campaign was conducted, an explanation of its results might be easy. As it is, we can only repeat that favorite remark of the undergraduate engaged in the attempt to learn to speak German like a native (of the United States): *Das verstehe ich nicht.*

In "Le Desert de L'Amour" (Paris: Grasset), Francois Mauriac is said to have produced a novel that in delicacy of understanding, dignity, and interest marks a new advance in his work. The book is the chronicle of the love of three men for a woman of commonplace personality and interests, and its interest is partially derived from the fact that of her suitors two are father and son. There is, however, nothing melodramatic about the story.

Under the title "Intérieurs" (Paris: Plon-Nourrit), Albert Thibaudet, one of the most eminent critics of present-day France, has collected three studies of nineteenth century writers. His essays on Baudelaire, Fromentin, and Amiel are well worth the reading.

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

Art

MAMMONART. By *Upton Sinclair.* Pasadena: Published by the author.

EVERYDAY ART. By *Ami Mali Hicks.* Dutton. $3.

JACOB EPSTEIN. (Contemporary British Artists.) Scribners. $2.

ALBERT RUTHERSTON. (Contemporary British Artists.) Scribners. $2.

Belles Lettres

A HISTORY OF FRENCH LITERATURE. By C. H. WRIGHT. New York: Oxford University Press. Revised Edition. 1925. $3.50.

This standard history of French literature has been reissued with a thoroughly revised bibliography and a rewritten final chapter on characteristics of contemporary authors, with a very interesting comment on the tendency among French scholars toward *fichomanie,* or the cult of the card catalogue, and away from the study of ideas and that clear presentation which was their pride.

AFTERGLOW: PASTELS OF GREEK EGYPT, 69 B. C. By M. S. BUCK. Nicholas L. Brown. $2.

These half dozen sketches are as lovely in form and temper as their matter is suggestive. For Egypt in her decline, and more especially Alexandria, restless, capricious, now vacillating where once her power had dominated, affords a fascinating study for the meticulous; and well has Mr. Buck apprehended this "afterglow" with fitting delicacy and distinction. His very title invites us, and throughout the ensuing scenes we are held by that recurrent murmur of dissatisfaction and reminiscence, the consistent refrain of a decadent epoch. This spiritual disquietude had, as Mr. Machen points out in his preface, grown common to all men, and here philospher and priest, Greek dandy, courtesan, and shepherdess are deftly combined to reflect the various aspects of its moods and sympathies.

Mr. Buck writes a prose of much nicety and charm. Its clarity is never dulled, and in tone and movement it is distinctly free from those encumbrances usual to works entailing much scholarship. Its measure at all times is appropriate: in the court of the Pharaoh it rises naturally to the flush of purple, modulates as we listen to the queries of the thinkers, or quickens to the simple gayety of a Cyprean shepherd girl. There is no straining for effect here, no gaudy tinting, no spacious sensationalism; as a writing of its kind should be, it is slender, graceful, proteiform. Perhaps one wonders how Auletes, father of Cleopatria, can foretell at her birth her future greatness with such precision. But the past was wont to dream, and Mr. Buck is fortunate in this added touch of loveliness.

Biography

GUESTS AND MEMORIES. By UNA TAYLOR. Oxford University Press. 1924. $4.20.

In the preface to this rather rambling collection of Victorian memories the author admits that her book has written itself and that she is only the "amanuensis of the past." Unfortunately these self-made books are usually bad workmen. They have never known the wholesome discipline of the blue pencil and for their lack of experience the reader has to pay.

Sir Henry Taylor, whose memory is here invoked, was one of the lesser stars in the Victorian firmament. His "Philip van Artevelde," an elaborate historical drama, won him considerable reputation as a poet, if not as a dramatist. Macready produced it, but like all closet drama it was hopelessly unfit for the pitiless publicity of the stage. After running for six nights it was withdrawn. Of the guests whom Miss Taylor summons from the past the most important are Aubrey de Vere, the Irish poet, James Spedding, the Baconian scholar, and Jowett of Balliol fame. In view of the fact that Sir Henry Taylor has himself left us a very full, not to say garrulous, autobiography it may be questioned whether this fresh volume of reminiscences was justified. He was obviously a man with a genius for friendship, but we doubt whether these recollections, pleasant as they are, will arouse a very fierce interest in twentieth century readers.

Fiction

THE LORING MYSTERY. By JEFFERY FARNOL. Little, Brown. 1925. $2.

"Sir, I'll tell ye," says amiable Constable Shrig. "This here vorld is made up of two sorts of people—murder-ers and murder-ees." There are plenty of each in "The Loring Mystery," and Jasper Shrig, who is sort of a nineteenth century Sherlock Holmes, has much room for the exercise of his talents. Thrilling events follow each other with the startling rapidity of machine gun fire on a still night. The hero's villainous Uncle is found with a dagger run through his throat. Shrig is almost strangled to death in a subterranean passage. A ghost walks. Young David, the hero, knocks out several Goliaths with his American trained fists, and beautiful girls are often in peril of their virtue.

The story begins with the finding of a body, supposedly that of David, American heir to the estate of Loring, in the Thames. The real David has been knocked over the head, and when he recovers his memory, which has been temporarily destroyed by the blow, finds himself an outcast. He makes a journey to the estate to see his Uncle who tries to kill him. A few days later the Uncle is found murdered. Suspicion falls on several people, but most heavily upon the beautiful ward of the murdered Sir Nevil. In this situation there is a slight technical flaw, as the killing was done in such a way as to be justifiable homicide under common law, and the suspense attendant upon Constable Shrig's tracking the killer is built upon the presumption of murder.

Over-logical individuals who would be inclined to quibble over such an error ought not to read "The Loring Mystery." It is melodrama without one single rag of disguise, and not intended for those who are unable to accept romantic conventions. Heroes are out and out heroic, and villains double dyed in their villainy. Justice is poetic and sentiment unashamed. It is really a rattling good yarn. Jeffery Farnol has a knack for making the impossible seem, for the time, real. His characters have individuality if not reality, particularly Mr. Shrig with his jargon of archaic slang. His style has a dash that makes the narrative run at a lightning pace and occasional flashes of beauty set it off handsomely. To any who enjoyed "The Broad Highway," who know they are being tricked and like it, this book will afford a very pleasant evening.

THE BLACK CARGO. By J. P. MARQUAND. New York: Scribners. 1925. $2.

J. P. Marquand is cutting strange waters in the sea of the romantic costume-adventure novel. He has somehow overcome the known prejudice of magazine editors against the story of psychological action, and he has trodden unfeelingly upon that pet of adventure tale readers, physical action. Probably Mr. Marquand himself is not aware that he is a pioneer, for he does not write as if he were consciously attempting something new: he writes with more than inventive skill. His narrative flows in a current of sincere feeling, and its surface is covered with words that are alive.

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(*Continued on next page*)

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The New Books

(*Continued from preceding page*)

Fiction

philosophizing or describing action, Marquand uses a poetic, swinging style.

The intellectual reader who may chance upon this novel will remain fascinated to the very end, and he will not need to apologize to himself for his interest, since there is nothing to insult the intelligence or strain the credulity of the discriminating.

MR. COLLIN IS RUINED. By FRANK HELLER. Crowell. 1924. $2.

The fecund brain of Mr. Heller hatches ideas as a turtle hatches eggs. Not only is there resemblance in the number produced, but also in the potential individuality of each one; realized when the story (or turtle) is developed. One looks at a new volume bearing Mr. Heller's name and says to himself, "Here's another yarn about Mr. Collin playing tricks on his enemies and coming out with a pocketful of money. I know all his stunts by this time. But there isn't anything to do this evening. . . ." He opens the book and the prestidigitator has taken something new out of the fathomless hat. Amazing!

This time Mr. Collin goes in for authorship. Wielding a pen in each of his dextrous hands he writes an adventure story for a dime novelist who has written himself out, and literary criticism for a critic whose cynicism has incapacitated him for work. Through the medium of the story he relates the adventures of his two friends, Lavertisse and Graham, up to the time of their imprisonment by a Bolshevist politician. At this point Mr. Collin abandons his literary pursuits and enters the story in person. The threads of the narrative are drawn together and the dénouement and explanation follow quickly.

This book also differs from its predecessors in treatment. It is somewhat less romantic and whimsical, more intricate in plot and detailed in characterization and background. The scene is the chaos of post-war Italy, which affords excellent opportunity for Mr. Collin's "honest business transactions." The characters of the critic and the novelist are interestingly, if somewhat crudely, drawn, and show that Mr. Heller is not confined to the marionettes of ordinary mystery stories. The complicated plot leads at times to an incoherence and crowding of incident which might have been avoided with a little more care. An uneveness of style also seems to indicate that the author was in a hurry. Yet these are common faults, and may be forgiven in view of the small glory attached to writing this type of fiction. "Mr. Collin Is Ruined" is better reading than many a more pretentious book.

BOBBED HAIR. By TWENTY AUTHORS. Putnams. 1925.

Into this rollicking tale have been poured the high spirits of twenty writers who for the nonce have set aside their preoccupations to produce a mystery story of riotous sort. The book is written in sportive mood, with such evident enjoyment of its irregular character on the part of its authors as to lend it a gusto that transforms its extravagances from absurdities into delightful fooling. Despite the varied nature of its authorship—its contributors range from Carolyn Wells to George Palmer Putnam, taking in George Agnew Chamberlain, George Barr McCutcheon, Robert Gordon Anderson, Alexander Woollcott, Meade Minnegerode, John V. A. Weaver, Kermit Roosevelt, Dorothy Parker, Louis Bromfield, Gerald Mygatt, Rube Goldberg, Bernice Brown, Wallace Irwin, Frank Craven, H. C. Witwer, Elsie Janis, Ed Streeter, and Sophie Kerr on the way—the story moves forward with directness and consistency, though with the happy haphazardness that the gods vouchsafe to no single author. From the moment that its heroine, confronted with the dilemma of choosing between two lovers or losing an inheritance, and hitting upon the expedient of indicating her decision by the length of her locks, employs disguise as the means of delaying her announcement, until the final dénouement the interest of the tale never flags. The curious reader will find it not merely an amusing bit of persiflage but an entertaining study of authors outside of their usual *genre*.

DOMINION. By JOHN PRESLAND. Stokes. 1925. $2.

This "novel of Cecil Rhodes and South Africa" is no effigy of romance, hung upon a frame of history, filled with indifferent fictional stuffing and animated by love. The term, novel, in this instance is politely deceptive, like a black domino, despite the fact that two women, one vitally, have their subdued places in the accounting of Rhodes. On the other hand, he who likes his history, not diluted nor dry-as-dust, but charged with life and drama, is due to enjoy this story of mighty plans and epic endeavors.

Rhodes said, "Here's potential wealth—make it; potential energy—harness it; potential empire—take it for your own. You've got to work with the weapons at hand. Sentimentality isn't the road to achievement." "Dominion" typifies the stature of Cecil John Rhodes; it also includes of necessity the figure of his fearless little friend, Dr. Jameson, who helped him so greatly yet in the end unwittingly caused ruin and travail to the Empire Builder.

The story deals with the days of 1895, when Rhodes, in his 42d year, was Premier of Cape Colony, and the name of Jameson was bright with his exploits among the Matabele. For many today the name of Rhodes looms in greater relief than the many inflammable factors which gave birth to the impassioned conflict of the Boer War. "Dominion" is a cross-section of the times, its pictures give perspectives and close-ups of men and their motives, the chess-like plays in the origin of Jameson's ill-fated Raid, the swift gestures of the Raid itself, the sudden and dramatic aftermath to Rhodes, Jameson, and the actors in general. The story is handled with sympathy if not partisanship and is, we judge, fairly and convincingly painted in its human aspects. In any event, its appeal is intensely human. What fiction there is (if it be fiction)—the existence and position of Mrs. Maltravers, the cultivated courtesan and daughter of one, in Rhodes's life—runs like an ominous, minor thread—a sapper's wire which eventually explodes a mine beneath great undertakings.

"Dominion" contains the essence of romance; filled with suspense, momentum and the influence of great figures, its stuff unfolds powerfully.

Miscellaneous

CONSCIOUS AUTOSUGGESTION. By EMILE COUÉ and J. L. ORTON. Appleton. 1924.

There is nothing essentially new in this book for those who have already taken up the Coué doctrine to any extent. The most useful chapter is that devoted to the application of the doctrine to children,—three chapters being devoted to this question. There are also chapters on Couéism and Diet, Physical Culture, Maternity, etc. There are undoubtedly some useful hints and suggestions in the book, which will help those who need advice and assistance along these lines. Books such as these will, at all events, help to antidote pessimistic tendencies and negative thoughts—such as expressed by Ambrose Bierce, in one of his facious moments, when he defined longevity as "the undue prolongation of the fear of death!"

CHILD-HEALTH LIBRARY. Edited by JOHN C. GEBHART. New York: Robert K. Hass, Inc. 1925. 10 vols.

These ten diminutive volumes issued by what was formerly the Little Leather Library Corporation bear the stamp of their value in the names on their title pages. Mr. Gebhart, the general editor, has entrusted the brief discussions of the principles of child-health to men and women of the caliber of Harbeck Halsted, Stafford McLean. Lucy H. Gillett, David Mitchell, and M. Alice Asserson. They in their turn have used the opportunity afforded them to present in concise, concrete, and simple form the cardinal principles to be regarded in the rearing of children. From the first volume, devoted to pre-natal care and the baby's birth, the series advances through the strictly medical aspects of child-health to discussion of child psychology and education, constituting as a whole an admirable brief library of the greatest value to mothers. The untechnical nature of the exposition, and authoritativeness of the material presented, should make this little set of widest usefulness. Its purpose and scope are set forth in a general introduction by Haven Emerson.

THE LITTLE CHURCH AROUND THE CORNER. By GEORGE MACADAM. Putnams. 1925. $3.75.

Many New York churches have a far longer and varied history than that of the Church of the Transfiguration, now buried in the canyon of East Twenty-Ninth Street: many are more important architecturally

(*Continued on page 652*)

Speaking of Books

The English Bible

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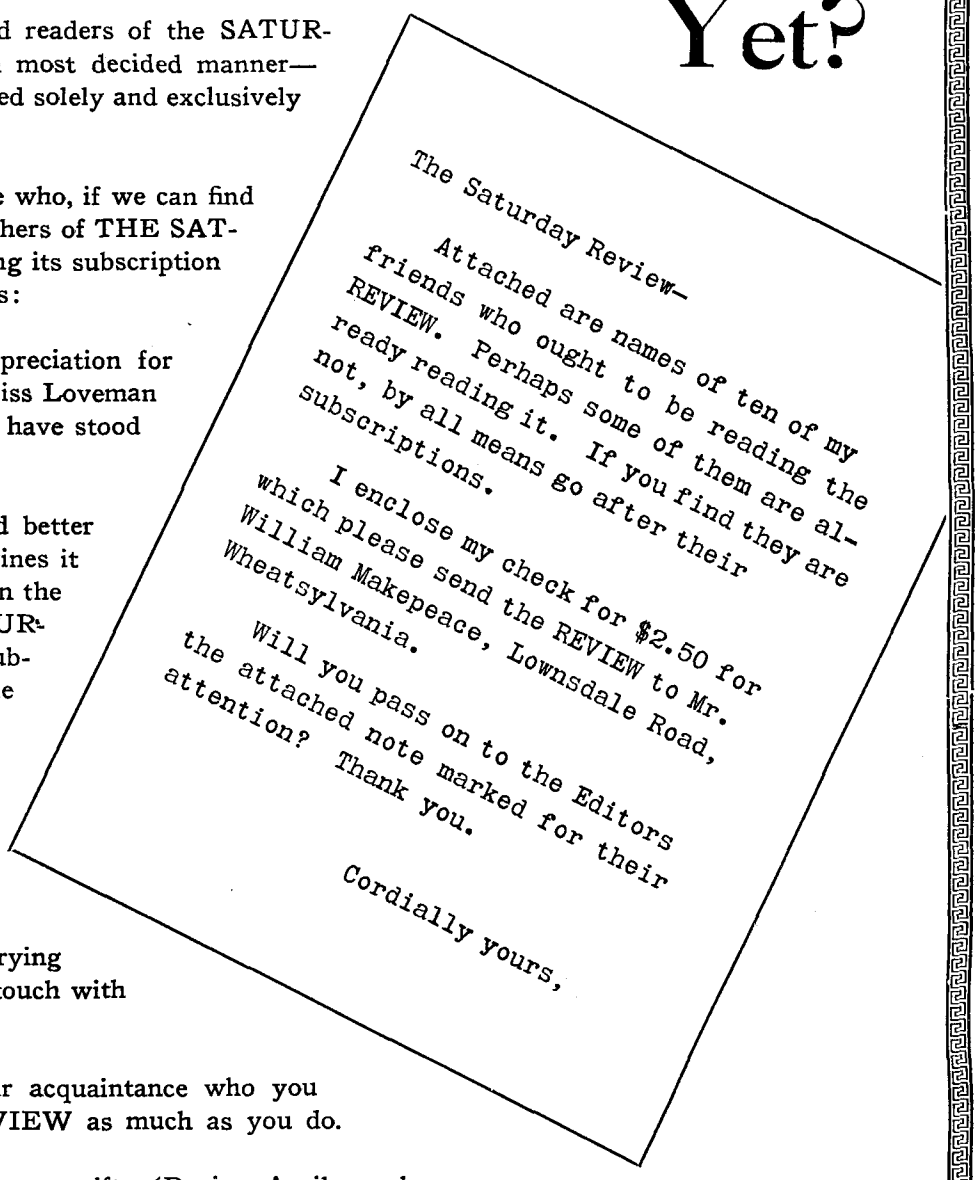
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The New Books

(*Continued from preceding page*)

and some have played a greater part in the social evolution of the city but it is certain that none is so widely known throughout the country as the "Little Church Around the Corner," which has given its title to a once popular novel, to a play that still holds the boards, now and then, after more than twenty years, and even to a moving picture show which still runs not only in America but has "travelled to South America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and Australia." That its fame rests upon an accident is true, but that it not all of the story: it is not entirely factitious. That would not have sufficed except for the fact that the incident embodies ideals of kindliness and toleration that make lasting appeal, and for the further fact that these ideals were incarnated for seventy-five years in the two Rectors, Dr. George H. Houghton and Dr. George C. Houghton, uncle and nephew, whose ministries cover that long period.

It was just before Christmas, 1870, that a narrow-minded clergyman refused to bury the popular comedian, George Holland, from his church, on the ground that he was "a play actor," remarking to Joseph Jefferson, who was trying to arrange for the funeral that "there was a little church around the corner," where he might get it done, to which Jefferson, as he tells in his autobiography, replied—"Then if this be so, God bless the little church around the corner!" The incident got into the papers and a wave of indignation swept the country. The name had come to stay.

One result of this popularity was that it became a favorite church for those desiring to marry. But it never was anything of a Gretna Green for although Dr. Houghton is said to have performed more than 7,500 marriages he also refused to marry more than twenty thousand couples. In fact, both the Houghtons were steadily orthodox, even sturdily old-fashioned in creed—refusing, for instance to recognize divorce or to marry an unbaptized person.

Mr. MacAdam has made a highly readable story of it, making full use of papers prepared by the late Dr. Houghton, recording many anecdotes and quoting freely from letters. It is well illustrated, and has value as local history but is even more worth-while as a "human document." It is to be regretted that it has no detailed index—which should be supplied in later editions.

SPIRIT AND MUSIC. By H. Ernest Hunt. Dutton. 1924.

One approaches this book with a certain trepidation. The subject is vast, the book is small. The connection implied in the title is a matter for controversy. It is frequently asserted that there is nothing in music beyond a collection of sensuously pleasing or displeasing sounds; that delight in music is purely physical, that the art is incapable of arousing the most profound emotions, that spirituality, in short, does not exist in music. One looks for a discussion of these points in Mr. Hunt's book, and for a host of kindred subjects. Does one find them?

We fear that the answer cannot be wholly affirmative. In spite of its title the book is unpretentious and evidently written not for the musician nor for the philosopher of æsthetics, but for the layman. It contains much than is obvious, sheer common sense. It is generally clear though not always strictly coherent; not without humor, it is sometimes sentimental; but it is admirably free from technicalities and concise. Yet it is all too concise and all too assured. There is no discussion here but a statement of one very definite attitude toward music. The man already sympathetic with its ideas will find in it a corroboration of what he himself has believed; others will remain unconvinced, aloof. In his anxiety to be comprehensible Mr. Hunt has become facile; and his book will make no converts. One regrets the terseness which has too severely pruned the thought and made it generally inadequate to the lofty title.

ENGLISH HOUSE GROUNDS. Photographic Views Compiled by Mabel Parsons. Text by Clarence Fowler. Eugene Clute, Editor. New York: Mabel Parsons, publisher. 1925. $7.50.

Owners of small and moderate size country places who love garden planning will derive profit and pleasure from this volume of photographic views of English gardens. The text is confined to a brief note by Mr. Clute, explaining how Samuel Parsons, the eminent landscape architect, had conceived the idea of a collection of views of smaller English gardens; and to an excellent three-page article by Mr. Fowler on the characteristics and beauties of English plantings, formal and informal. He remarks sagely on "informality, a word that the amateur so dearly loves, but seldom understands." A primary virtue of English gardens is, of course, their charming naturalistic settings; it is difficult to appraise how much of their beauty comes from their being part of a whole countryside which seems to our eyes to be neatly planted and kept. The twenty-three plates of photographs in the present volume may be expected to stir longings and ambitions in many breasts to adopt at least some of the many suggestions to be gathered here. It is a delightful book.

A Real A B C of Gardening. By *A. J. Macself.* Scribners. $2.

Platinum Metals. By *Ernest A. Smith.* Pitman.

Brain Tests. Prepared by *John Monk Saunders* and *George Palmer Putnam.* Putnam.

Everybody's Puzzle Book. Compiled by *Mary Virginia Worstall.* Century. $1.50.

Parties for Occasions. By *Claire Wallis* and *Nellie Ryder Gates.* Century. $1.75.

THE SWALLOW-BOOK (*Das Schwalbenbuch*). By Ernst Toller. English Version by Ashley Dukes. Oxford University Press. 1924. 85 cents.

This little paper-backed book,—it is scarcely more than a pamphlet—consists of a group of lyrics written by the famous young German playwright during his term in the fortress of Niederschönenfeld as a political prisoner. The author's dedication reads: "In my cell two swallows nested in the year 1922." Almost all of the poems have to do with the history of this pair of swallows,—their nest-building, the brooding of the mother-bird over her eggs, the first flight of the nestlings, the starvation of the second brood, the final departure of the parent birds. The effectiveness of the lyrics lies in the palpitant pattern of wings and bars, in crossed and broken lines. Toller has that painful sympathy with non-human life which is so intense in sensitive men who have suffered like hunted things,—the victims of "man, the political animal," in a new sense of this definition. The poems, none of them very long, all of them in unrhymed free verse, are marked by a deep tenderness for all helpless, wounded, denuded creatures, by a strong will to liberation, and by a gentle humor. Anatole France liked to insist that pity is the very essence of genius. If that is true, Toller's genius shows itself as luminously in his "Swallow-Book" as in his social dramas.

Mr. Duke's translation seems to be pretty adequate, as far as one can judge without having read the German. One wonders if the refrain "Zirizi, Zirizi, Zirizi" should not be transliterated "Tsiritsi, Tsiritsi, Tsiritsi," and lines like "My heart is drawn for winter stillness" are a feeble, awkward rendering of whatever Toller may have written. Such flaws are not too frequent to spoil the book, but one comes away from it well aware of the difficulty of englishing the text. It is perhaps a virtue of Mr. Dukes's work that he sharpens the reader's desire to read the original.

EBB-TIDE AND OTHER POEMS. By John McAlpin. Four Seas. 1925. $1.50.

A first book of lyrics. Here and there are lines of tenuous beauty. But, in general, there is little fresh phrasing and there are few themes not handled before by surer hands.

WIND FREE. By Marguerite Dixon Clark. Mosher. 1924.

The letterpress, paper, and binding of books from the Mosher Press is always a delight. The lyrics in this volume are comparatively undistinguished, but occasionally reflect a quaint temperament in a rather charming way.

Hafon. By *M. Somperides.* Bookshop of Encyclopædia Brittanica.

Goals Afar. By *Samuel Valentine Cole.* Marshall Jones.

Dionysus in Doubt. By *Edwin Arlington Robinson.* Macmillan. $1.75.

First Poems. By *Edwin Muir.* Huebsch. $1.50.

The Best Poems of 1924. Selected by *Thomas Moult.* Harcourt, Brace. $2 net.

Once in a Blue Moon. By *Marion Strobel.* Harcourt, Brace.

The Venture. By *Jean Kenyon Mackenzie.* Houghton Mifflin. $1.50.

The Oxford Book of Russian Verse. Chosen by *Maurice Baring.* Oxford University Press. $3.75.

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Pp. xiii + 719. $4.50.

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Travel

GRECIAN ITALY. By HENRY JAMES FORMAN. Boni & Liveright. 1924. $3.

Anyone who knows the beauties of Grecian Italy will appreciate the mood in which Mr. Forman has written his volume. It is less a description of that beautiful corner of the world—who could justly describe the magnificence of Sicily?—than a sustained outburst of enthusiasm, the reflection of the feelings which the island evoked in Mr. Forman and his fellow traveler rather than a porarayal of its scenic aspects and its points of historic and artistic interest. Mr. Forman has lent a lively character to his narrative by introducing into it jocular allusions to the small hardships and mishaps of traveling, and to the variant views of himself and his companion, and he has given it enough of specificness to make it recall pleasurably to the minds of others who have journeyed, as he has, to Palermo, and from it through the savage pass that leads out into the wind-swept, cactus-hedged plains before Segesta, to Girgenti, Taormina, tragic Messina, or Siracuse, the enchanting beauty of land and sea and sky in magnificent conjunction. And who that has shared it but would chuckle at his experience of ancient Sybaris—to cross for a moment to the Italian mainland? We are not so sure, however, as to the quality of that bean soup at the railway buffet, not if it bore any remote relation to the brand of breakfast served at that restaurant. We should have to sample it before we admitted its perfection, for . . . *Et ego in Arcadia.*

ALONG THE PYRENEES. By PAUL WILSTACH. Bobbs-Merrill. 1925. $4.

Mr. Wilstach knowing little of the stalwart land that fringes France and Spain struck out blindly. Chance conversations determined his course, made him turn his steps to quiet old Toulouse, and gave him from there the finest far view of the Pyrenees. He went where and as he listed, and the result seems extraordinarily successful. Moreover, his should be a valuable guide-book, for he has done nothing that is impossible to the most casual traveller.

But for pure enjoyment and fireside consumption, Mr. Wilstach's volume falls far short of other books upon the Pyrenees and the far corners of France and Spain. He lacks a ringing sense of the picturesque, his Catalans are dry dust beside those of John Dos Passos, his historical facts are facts and little more. Time and again he rouses anticipation, as in his visit to the tiny land of Andorra, set high up among the peaks. But if Andorra is excellent in anticipation, its actual description is none so good.

But this is certainly not true of Mr. Wilstach's best chapter, that on Lourdes and its miracles. Here he loses all his surface dulness, his inaptness at description and his halting style, and really presents an absorbing picture of the pilgrims and their shrine. It is a pity that he did not set down Garcassonne in prose as good.

Yet because Mr. Wilstach went everywhere that could be reached with due comfort, and because he followed the beaten trails that other travellers may themselves take, his is an excellent hand-book for the tourist. His running narrative sets down all sorts of interesting facts, points out the best places to see and the best ways to see them, and gives a good general idea of the fascinating land that lies between two countries and two seas.

(*Continued on next page*)

The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review.*

A BALANCED RATION

MEEK AMERICANS. By *Joseph Warren Beach* (University of Chicago Press.)

THE STORY OF IRVING BERLIN. By *Alexander Woollcott* (Putnams.)

THE BEST STORIES OF SARAH ORNE JEWETT (Houghton Mifflin.)

"Years ago," says J. P. B., Standford, Ky., "I read all the published works of Dickens except 'Edwin Drood': I could not stand the idea of starting and not finishing one of his tales. Some time back I picked up a copy with the intention of reading a few pages to see how it started, and before I knew it had reached the end." He has heard that the work has been "completed" by more than one writer, among the number Sir William Robertson Nicoll, and asks which succeeded best in "waving the magic wand of Dickens."

IT'S the old story, once you let that first chapter get you you are in for good. Long ago I read the second of the continuations, "John Jasper's Secret," by a New York newspaperman, Henry Morford, which like the first—a burlesque by Orpheus C. Kerr—identified Datchery with Bazzard. Though hopeless as a real continuation it is at least possible to get through it. But the third, "The Mystery of Edwin Drood Complete," published in Brattleboro, Vt., in 1873, is something awful: a "spirit pen" announcing itself as Charles Dickens goes droning on interminably in the best style of the Family Story Paper; it is one of the scandals of literature. Mrs. Richard Newton ("Gillan Vase") wrote a continuation, but this I have not read. The worth while books are not the continuations, but the attempts made by devoted scholars to figure out what Dickens would have done with the plot, given time to write down what was evidently clear in his mind to all but minor details. The first of these was Richard A. Proctor's "Watched by the Dead": a loving study of Dickens' "Half-Told Tale" (1887); this gave what was for long the best-known solution and is yet a popular one. J. Cuming Walters's "Clues to the Mystery of Edwin Drood" came in 1905, William Archer's "Mr. Datchery" and Andrew Lang's "The Puzzle of Dickens's Last Plot," in the same year. In 1908 came Edwin Charles's "Keys to the Drood Mystery"; "About Edwin Drood," by Henry Jackson, three years later, and in 1912 "The Problem of Edwin Drood," by Sir William Robertson Nicoll, the book of which J. B. P. has heard. This should not be confused with "Dickens's Own Story" by Sir W. R. Nicoll, published by Stokes last year: this latter is a series of studies of the novelist's personal life as it appears in his books, notably in the Dora and Flora episodes.

All these theories are summarized in "The Complete Mystery of Edwin Drood," by J. Cuming Walters (Chapman & Hall, 1912), the best single volume for beginning a Drood collection—for I may as well warn J. B. P. that he is in for it, and likely at any moment, once he gets the Drood fever into his system, to find himself tearing through all the literature on the subject. Walters's book begins with an account of the circumstances of the novel's production, pictures of Rochester and its cathedral, and identifications of a number of minor "Cloisterham" characters. It then gives the text as it appeared in print, with a fragmentary additional chapter discovered by Forster, and summarized statements of all famous theories adduced to that time, with Walters's own contribution, and a tremendous bibliography of Droodian magazine articles. But did that settle it? By no means: after that came "The Murder of Edwin Drood," by Percy Carden (Cecil Palmer), that, as I admit in my chapter on mysterious disappearances in the "Reader's Guide Book," took Edwin out of the missing and moved him for me, at last, into the other column of the casualties. And I have just read "The Mystery of the Drood Family," by Montagu Saunders (Cambridge University Press, 1914), that has a new Datchery theory. Curiously, the one other solution, so far as I have read, to bring in a new person altogether to take the part of Datchery is the unspeakable "spirit pen," but this Datchery is not that one.

Speaking of Dickens, as I get a chance to do so less often than I would like, let me improve it by mentioning "When Mr. Pickwick Went Fishing," by Dr. Samuel W. Lambert, lately published by the Brick Row Book Shop. Dr. Lambert is a devoted Izaak Walton collector, and browsing these fields came upon a book of "Maxims for Anglers," published three years before Pickwick Papers, illustrated by Robert Seymour, and showing in several plates the unmistakable figure and appurtenances of the Sage of Goswell Street. Following this clue he establishes to his own content and quite probably to that of many others, the paternity of Pickwick, who appears as an angler only once in the Papers, and then in a vignette on the green cover of the parts, a picture left quite unexplained in the text. And so much of the Drood mystery has to do with green cover design, this little book indirectly qualifies as part of this literature, as it certainly does as a Dickens item of interest.

Now I wish someone would tell me where I can get reports of the trial of Jasper for the murder of Drood, conducted by British men of letters for some charity some years ago.

L. M., Muscadine, Iowa, asked weeks ago "if there is in print a collection of the tales, the very tall tales, that all lumberjacks tell of their mythical hero, Paul Bunyan?"

I HAVE just found the book, which was not printed until December, 1924, and has just reached a second edition. "Paul Bunyan," by Esther Shephard (McNeil Press, Seattle), is genuine folklore in process of becoming. The legend grows with his exploits, the giant hero digs the Columbia River for a log-chute, builds a bunkhouse so tall that the top stories must be put on hinges to let the moon ride by. Reading, one gets the atmosphere, the laughter, even the language of the old White Pine Camps where these yarns got to going back in the sixties and have in the meantime taken on considerable momentum. There is little enough of this type of American folklore in print, and I am glad this has been printed. Next month Knopf is to publish "Paul Bunyan," by James Stevens, with delightful woodcuts by Allen Lewis.

YOU ARE A WRITER. **Don't you ever need help in marketing your work?**

I am a literary adviser. For years I read for Macmillan, then for Doran, and then I became consulting specialist to them and to Holt, Stokes, Lippincott, and others, for most of whom I have also done expert editing, helping authors to make their work saleable.

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Points of View

Chekhov's Letters

The Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
Sir:

Professor Wiener's review-notice of my edition of Chekhov's "Letters on the Short-Story, the Drama, and Other Literary Topics" is, I think, very decidedly a misrepresentation and belittling of the volume. My aim in preparing the work—as my Introduction to the book makes clear—was to gather those of Chekhov's letters that dealt with the short-story and the drama, and to group them in such a way that they would be of service to workers in the two literary forms of which Chekhov was a master. My hope is that the volume will be of practical worth to writers and "beginning" authors.

With this, I felt also that the general reader, and the student of Chekhov and of Russian literature, would welcome a volume of Chekhov's epistolary *causeries*—arranged, grouped and properly related—on many of his great literary contemporaries, on the Moscow Art Theatre, etc., etc.

By far the greater part of the material included in the volume was translated into English by myself and my assistants prior to the appearance of Mrs. Garnett's book of "Chekhov's Letters" (1920). I was the first to quote excerpts from these letters, in the course of an article on Chekhov printed in the *Dial* (Chicago, 1917). I have known Mrs. Garnett's excellent volume of "Chekhov's Letters" since its appearance—as the Introduction to my volume indicates. I certainly have no wish or intention to deny indebtedness to a predecessor. No worker in the field of literature would take so crass and ignorant an attitude. I am sorry that Professor Wiener imagines, quite gratuitously, that I would not acknowledge such indebtedness.

As for the "literary atrocities" that Professor Wiener cites against me—I hesitate to take issue with one of his standing in Russian studies. Certainly, he knows far more of the Russian language than I do, but Chekhov, I fancy, was not unacquainted with that language. When Chekhov talks of a Moscowite (that is, in a very particular sense of a denizen of the city of Moscow) he does not say Muscovite (that is, an inhabitant of Russia, in the general sense). Professor Wiener has yet to learn that English is a very tricksy language. It has pitfalls even for the most learned of men.

When Chekhov writes *Lvo Lvovich* Tolstoy, Professor Wiener wishes to take issue with him for not spelling the first name *Lev* (which your reviewer prefers to Lyov, Lyev, Lyef, Lyeff, etc.). But Professor Wiener forgets that, when writing letters, one sometimes—quite often, in fact—indulges in queer locutions and off-hand, friendly forms. Chekhov did not wear his mortar-board inside his head.

The remaining three "literary atrocities" that your reviewer has unearthed in my edition of "Chekhov's Letters" involve the question of transliteration. I wish to state that in my translations from the Russian I follow the system of transcription employed by the Royal Geographical Society of England—which I consider the best mode of transliterating from Russian into English. If Professor Wiener advocates this system of transcription, and if he finds any departures from it in my Chekhov book, he would have the right to infer that I have courted disaster, and would be justified in taking me to task. His wrath would then be righteous, though severe, I should judge. Unfortunately, I do not have access, at this time, to a copy of my edition of Chekhov's literary letters, so that I am unable to determine whether I am responsible for the errors which your reviewer displays horribly impaled on the end of his pen—but I am very eager indeed to disclaim infallibility. I do not know how it is with professors, but I am convinced that, in spite of precautions and infinite pains, the reading of proofs is a ticklish business: sometimes, little o's *will* turn into a's, and tiny t's have a way of disappearing like cockney h's and reappearing when they are not needed. Such things happen to ordinary mortals. I wish I were in a position to offer your reviewer a guinea apiece for the three errors he reveals. It may be that the royalties from the sale of the book will enable me to gratify this desire—but I shall make no payment unless your reviewer agrees first to withdraw the words "literary atrocities," and to substitute for them "atrocious misprints, atrocious carelessness, atrocious atrophy of attention while proof-reading," or some such castigating and ireful phrase. I am quite prepared to have the reviewer call me "atrocious editor," but I cannot help wishing that he had found a few words of appreciation to bestow on Chekhov's delightful Letters. Very many of them appear for the first time in English in my volume. As regards most of the others, the literary contents are for the first time completely translated and published.

LOUIS S. FRIEDLAND.

Baseball and Books

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

As a follow-up on your recent controversy about Zane Gray, I thought perhaps this would be of interest to some of your readers.

I have often wondered what a high-salaried ball player reads. I was disappointed, but not surprised.

This spring when the Chicago Cubs left for Catalina Island for spring training I gave Grover Cleveland Alexander, the famous pitcher, a copy of Willa Cather's "My Antonia," and asked him to read it and write some comment on it.

Here is what he wrote:

"That author certainly knows her Nebraska. I had three arguments with Mrs. Alexander before I finished the book. I won them all.

"But they were not serious arguments the missus and I had. You see, I am a little older than she is, and I can remember back farther.

"My father went to Nebraska in 1871. The first thing I remember was the sod houses. They were not the 'dobe huts, but red clay. There were also dugouts, just scooped out places in the side of a hill.

"Mrs. Alexander insisted that the author was all wrong, that log houses were the first shelters the settlers had. Her memory only goes back that far. She was right in a way, but so was I. . . .

"This 'Antonia' book was interesting to me only because it was written about Nebraska. I don't care for such stories as a rule, but I went all the way through it for I thought I was back home again. If it had been New Jersey, I probably wouldn't have gotten past the second page. I much prefer Zane Grey's works. He puts a lot of zip into all of them. There's a fellow who has something on his fast one."

I have been trying to dig up a real literary man among the ball players, but they tell me Fred Merkle, who made himself famous by failing to touch second one time, is the only genuine book fan in the game.

RALPH CANNON.

Chicago.

Town and Library

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

Not that the brilliant pen of Christopher Morley needs defense nor further tribute, yet we pause to inquire if his critic from the noble free city of Waterbury is aware of the twelve-mile limit? Surely the intriguing cafés of the Burlé Mieli and vicinage are well out beyond that!

To "see America first" is a patriotic and instructive thing (if one sees it with *both* eyes open), but a little journey to the "Café de la Sorbonné," for example, might improve an American's taste and style—for, obviously, a crass allusion to "booze" in relation to the dimly-glowing bottles of the Bowling Green are beside the mark.

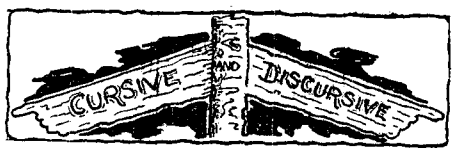
Moreover, Mr. Morley explains—in his current "Memoranda" (perhaps to obviate a possible misunderstanding on the part of his aridistic readers)—that he is drinking black coffee while yet standing at the bar. Could a Kansan do more?

Trusting the Bowling Greens may still retain their piquant dash of cognac flavor,

Appreciatively yours,

VA.

The *Nouvelle Revue Française* has just lost a brilliant editor and contributor in Jacques Rivière, who died the other day at the age of thirty-nine. He was an excellent writer, one of the first to recognize the genius of Proust and to encourage the advanced school of novelists by furthering the publication of their works. He himself wrote a clever psychological and analytical novel called "Aimée," in which he used tentatively his new theories on novel-writing; but his mature work was yet to be done. His latest critical articles, full of frank originality and initiative, which appeared in the "Nouvelle Revue Française" and elsewhere, will be gathered into a book. His personal influence on his friends and literary contemporaries was vital and fruitful.



By the PHOENICIAN

A GREAT American epic has been written. "Paul Bunyan," by *James Stevens*, the myth of the gargantuan American logger, whose original was Paul Bunyan, the French-Canadian of the Papineau Rebellion, is a grand tale. Stevens has concocted it from all the Bunyan stories afloat in lumber-camps and made it into a story full of high imagination, great fantasy, and superbly humorous detail. There is uproarious gusto in the telling. We have been enthralled for an hour or more skimming the first half of the advance copy that fell into our hands. The book will be published on the tenth of April, and we recommend every one but the deadly literal-minded to beg, borrow or steal one. * * * A new collection of short stories by *Richard Connell*, under the title of "Variety," includes a comic story, a satiric story, a sex story (of a most original sort!) one of mystery, one of sentiment, one cynical, an advertising story, a success story, a business story, a love story, and so on. While Connell does not always hit on all cylinders he, nevertheless, produces light comedy that usually floats one genially about the giblets (to borrow a phrase from *Browning*). * * * *Stephen Bone* has illustrated with most attractive woodcuts the "Selected Poems" of *W. H. Davies*, which Harcourt puts out at two dollars. And a small, pleasant book for children is "Nurse Lovechild's Legacy: Being a Mighty Fine Collection of the Most Noble, Memorable and Veracious Nursery Rhymes, Embellished by *C. Lovat Fraser*,"—another item for collectors of the work of this late master-draughtsman with the reed pen. * * * "The 8.45" is herewith recommended to all commuters. It is written with a light, entertaining touch by *Robert M. Gay*, who, as the narrator, encounters all the difficulties of living in the country and catching the 8.45 every morning. The humors of suburban existence are handled with just the proper cheerful lugubriousness, a paradoxical state that can be obtained only by seasoned commuters. * * * Coy Spring brings poets in its train. *Edwin Arlington Robinson's* latest book, "Dionysus in Doubt," though not one of his very best, is of considerable interest, *Aline Kilmer's* "The Poor King's Daughter," her third volume, is slight in bulk but of no slight charm, *John Drinkwater* brings "New Poems," the result of two years' writing, and *Charles Hanson Towne* has collected the poetry of *Robert Gilbert Welsh*, who died so gallantly rescuing a girl from drowning. This last named volume is in the Appleton Library of Verse under the title of "Azrael and Other Poems." Towne has furnished it with a preface. * * * *Harold K. Guinsburg*, formerly of Simon & Schuster, and *George S. Oppenheimer*, who for the last three and a half years has been advertising and publicity manager for Alfred A. Knopf, have now founded *The Viking Press*, which has taken the name Viking as a symbol of enterprise, adventure and exploration in the publishing field. The Press's list will consist of only a few titles each year, and there will be especial concentration on format. *Rockwell Kent* has designed the Viking Press's trademark. * * * A youngster of twenty-one who has had two books of poems published and whose translation of *Francois Villon* is now on the press is *Lucius M. Beebe*, at present taking a special course at Harvard. Last year at Yale he was Fence Orator of his class and a Cup man of the *Yale Record*. Beebe has just assumed editorship of the *Harvard Crimson Bookshelf*, the only literary tabloid magazine published by any college newspaper in the country. * * * On April 16th a *Thomas Seltzer* Testimonial Dinner will take place at the Hotel Plaza to celebrate Mr. Seltzer's fifth publishing anniversary. Among the speakers will be *Glenn Frank*, *Carl Van Doren*, and *Padraic Colum*. * * * The *Youth's Companion* announces with satisfaction that the *Atlantic Monthly* has acquired an interest in its business, and will aid actively in the management. The new Board of Directors will include *Ellery Sedgwick*, President, and *MacGregor Jenkins*, Treasurer, of the Atlantic Monthly Co. * * * At N. Y. U. the drama has now taken its place on a par with football and baseball. Chancellor *Elmer Ellsworth Brown* recently awarded varsity letters in dramatics to ten members of the Dramatic Society! Golly, but we wish they'd given us our "Y" for writing light verse when we were at college! * * * *W. L. George* has written "The Story of Woman." But then W. L. was always a daring man. * * * Macmillan have just got out an attractive publicity brochure on *Stella Benson*. * * * The advisory board of *Pan: Poetry and Youth*, a new publication which will prance out of the wilderness in late April, includes *Don Marquis*, *Conrad Aiken*, *George Sterling*, *Vachel Lindsay*, *Maxwell Bodenheim*, *Witter Bynner*, etc. The editors, *Charles Phillips* and *Harry McGuire*, should be addressed Box 73 University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Indiana. "Pan" will interpret for older folk youthful realistic novels, chameleon-like youthful philosophies, youthful plays, poetry, and what-you-will. * * * "The Nervous Wreck," a recent popular play was founded on a novel by *E. J. Rath*, and we learn for the first time from *E. C. Ranck* in the *Louisville Courier-Journal* that "E. J. Rath" was the pseudonym of *Chauncey Corey Brainerd*, for many years city editor of the *Brooklyn Eagle*, and his wife, *Edith Rathbone Jacobs*. The name was formed by using Mrs. Brainerd's initials and the first part of her middle name. Brainerd and his wife were killed in the Columbia Theatre disaster in Washington. Ranck speaks of Brainerd as "the finest and whitest newspaper man that I have ever known." * * * The special poetry number of the *Southwest Review* (formerly the *Texas Review*), edited by *Jay B. Hubbell*, contains some excellent poetry. *John Gould Fletcher's* "The Seven Cities of Cibola," *Lew Sarett's* "Altyn," and *Robert Graves's* article on "Poetic Control by Spirits" are particularly good. * * * Dropped along the Gypsy Trail is the information that a certain hotel in Switzerland, one hour from Interlaken, (about one hundred and fifty rooms at only three dollars and up a day including meals) is called Schloss Hotel, Schönegg, Spiez, and appeals especially to artists and literary people. We've seen pictures of it, and it looks to us like a grand place! * * * *James Boyd*, whose first novel, "Drums" is out, is said to be a boss novelist. *John Galsworthy*, when visiting in our midst, considered him a writer of exceptional promise. Scribner's spring list has a lot of boyds now that are erl right: *Thomas*, *Ernest* and *James*. * * * And finally, for a while, a privately printed work in *belles lettres* entitled "The Triptych's Penny Toys" has pleased us extravagantly. The rhymester is *Wilbur Macey Stone*, and the artists *Jay Chambers* and *William Jordan*. The book is a labor of love, the illustrations are colored by hand, the edition is of 99 numbered copies only, of which 75 are for sale, and if you apply to The Triptych, Room 1127, 15 Park Row, you *may* be able, for two dollars, to get hold of a copy to take home to the children. As for us, we wouldn't part with our copy for five!

The New Books

(*Continued from preceding page*)

War

THE MILITARY USES OF ASTRONOMY. By MAJOR F. C. MOLESWORTH. Longmans, Green. 1924. $1.25 net.

Here is a volume which makes the soldier long for active service in the field, far from the back bending desks of Washington. It is simple enough to be understood by anyone who reads with attention; it is scientific enough to tell how the thorough astronomer determines and calculates; and still it is a practical field manual.

Officers of the British Army (says the General who writes the Foreword), spend much of their service in the empty places of the world, where there are no roads or sign-posts, and often no maps. If they can learn thoroughly what Major Molesworth has explained so clearly, and can apply the knowledge instinctively in desert or bush, they may save the lives of their men, or make certain the success of an operation.

British troops might have to land on coasts where tides are uncalculated; and here is a rule-of-thumb method of approximating their occurrence. The stars are of use in military operations (with instances cited) for telling the time and for finding direction; and a workable method is laid out. Yet for guiding a night march a planet may be more useful because brighter, more visible on hazy nights, and apparent to the entire column; and thus and so you use the stars. So eminently applicable and useful does the material in the book seem that it makes one long for the night sky in open country where soldier, or scout, nature lover might enjoy the keen satisfaction of fitting the appropriate constellations into the fascinating cross-word puzzle pattern of Major Molesworth's book.

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The World of Rare Books

By Frederick M. Hopkins

SALE OF BROOKS MANUSCRIPTS

THE collection of historical and literary autograph letters and manuscripts formed by the late Oliver Kingsley Brooks of Cleveland, together with the remaining portion of the library of the late George Manierre of Chicago, were sold at the American Art Galleries March 18 and 19. The 808 lots brought $18,097. The highest price, $850, was paid for General Burgoyne's orderly book containing terms for the surrender of the British Army at Saratoga. This record consisted of 116 pages containing numerous general orders issued during the progress of the campaign and full details of the final terms on which the British Army laid down its arms in what proved to be the decisive battle of the Revolution. The price which this manuscript historical record brought seems very low when compared with the prices which the manuscripts of popular authors have been bringing.

Other representative lots and the prices realized were the following:

Boswell (James). A. L. S., 1p. 4to, Edinburgh, March 12, 1776, to Mr. Michle. $150.

Burns (Robert). Seven lines in his handwriting, signed, 1p. oblong 16mo, n. d. The conclusion of a letter. $110.

Clark (George Rogers). A. L. S. 2pp. large folio, Louisville, May 1786. Long and interesting letter to Patrick Henry, governor of Virginia. $80.

Clemens (S. L.). "Writings," 35 vols., 8vo, boards, New York, 1922. Definitive edition with author's autograph. $160.

Cooper (James Fenimore). "Precaution," 2 vols., 12mo, contemporary half leather, New York, 1820. First edition of author's first book. $80.

Cooper. "The Spy," 2 vols., 12mo, half leather, New York, 1821. First edition, said to be first auction sale in twenty years. $330.

De la Mare (Walter). "Crossings. A Fairy Tale," 8vo, vellum, Westminster, 1921. One of 10 copies printed on vellum by the Beaumont Press. $105.

Dickens (Charles). A. L. S. 3pp. 12mo, Devonshire Terrace, December 16, 1841. Written shortly before his first visit to America, which he mentions. $105.

Queen Elizabeth. D. S. 1p. oblong folio, on vellum, June 20, 1579. $112.50.

Garrick (David). A. L. S. 2pp. 12mo, n. p., n. d. In regard to the printing of a prologue. $110.

Goldsmith (Oliver). A. L. S. 1p. 4to, n. d. A short note of three lines. $210.

Hamilton (Alexander). A. D. S. by Hamilton and countersigned by Aaron Burr, 1p. 12mo, September 14, 1799. Rare combination of signatures. $180.

Harte (Bret). Manuscript entitled, "The Goddess of the Excelsior," 20pp. 4to, in levant binding. $255.

Gould (John). "The Birds of Great Britain," 25 original parts as issued, atlas folio, boards uncut, London, 1862-73. Rare in parts. $235.

Poe (Edgar Allan). A. L. S. 1p. 4to, Philadelphia, March 1, 1844. In regard to the delivery of a lecture. $165.

Washington. A. L. S. 1p. 4to, Mount Vernon, August 1799. Written a few months before his death. $130.

Revere (Paul). Autograph certificate signed, 16mo, Boston, May 13, 1779. $100.

Wilde (Oscar). Manuscript, notes and epigrams, 5pp. 4to, in case. $125.

FIRST editions of American and English authors of the nineteenth century down to our time, the property of various owners, was sold at the Anderson Galleries March 20, 284 lots bringing $3,678. Most of the material was not rare and items that were unusual were not always in just the right condition, but the prices showed the still strong demand for modern first editions. The original numbers of Gelett Burgess's "The Lark," 2 vols., small 4to, San Francisco, 1896-97, brought $16; first editions of John Galsworthy, 51 vols., various sizes, London, 1908-24, $150; a complete set of Kate Greenaway's "Almanac," with variations, 27 vols., 18mo and 16mo, in original bindings, London, v. d., $150; Kipling's "The Science of Rebellion," 8vo, wrappers, London, 1901, first and only edition, $77.50; Stevenson's "Prince Otto," 12mo, London, 1885, $65; an extensive collection of 125 vols. containing critical and biographical notices of Stevenson, v. p., v. d., $125; and Walt Whitman's "The Poetry of the Future," 8vo, sewn, in case, 1881, the author's revised proof from the *North American Review*, $145.

FORTHCOMING LONDON SALE

EVERY important sale will be held at Sotheby's In London on April 6, 7 and 8. It comprises 765 lots selected from various consignments. The most important lot is the Cardigan Chaucer, a manuscript of the "Canterbury Tales," the most important early English manuscript of literary interest which has been offered for sale in the auction room for a long time. It is believed that a collation of this manuscript, hitherto unedited, would bring to light numerous important readings unkonwn to previous editors of Chaucer. Other important items include the Kilmarnock edition of Burns's "Poems," 1786, uncut and in the original wrappers; a remarkable collection of tracts by Increase Mather; First, Third and Fourth Folios of Shakespeare; Thackeray's "Second Funeral of Napoleon," 1841, a fine drawing by Blake; the manuscript of a sonnet by John Keats; and fine autograph letters by Boswell, Thackeray, Penn; manuscripts of famous musicians, and many historical autograph letters of American interest. This is one of the most important London sales of the season.

A cablegram from Paris states that Dr. Rosenbach is the purchaser of an extremely rare eighteenth century illustrated book on costumes, the star lot in the selections from the library of the late Deschamp Scrive, recently sold at the Salle Bruot in Paris, bringing the high price of 500,000 francs.

Erratum

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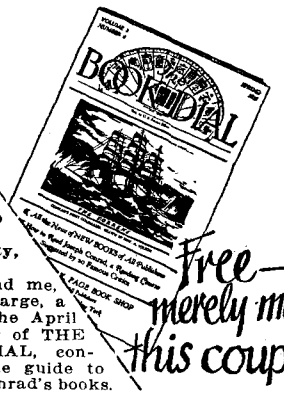

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The Phoenix Nest

WE have fussed about with modern authorship a bit in our time, and so, when the course in Modern Authorship from the Palmer Institute of Authorship drifted across our vision recently, we were all (as the genial old term has it) agog. The graphic chart of the Palmer Course and Service is, in the first place, exhaustive. It begins with the registration of the student and a personal letter from the President to the newly enrolled student (which puts heart in him right away), and it ramifies swiftly into a magazine and novel writing course and a screen writing course. We don't suppose it teaches how to write a whole magazine, though we have known of a few editors who did pretty nearly that. But both courses particularize seven problem assignments, boast a constructive criticism service, a permanent story sales department service, an unlimited consulting service, and end up in a blaze of twelve monthly lectures, twelve confidential monthly letters and twelve issues of the *Story World Magazine.*

Chapter VIII (we always leap *in medias res*) is prefaced by the inscription over Alma Tadema's studio door in London, "As the sun is to flowers, so is art to life"—but then (a sigh of relief) we're not taking a course in painting. Chapter VIII in due course instructs us to "perch yourself mentally upon the edge of a cloud and look down upon the millions of men that swarm the earth." We concentrated on that for half an hour.

Then we opened another volume of the course at random to another Chapter VIII and learned that here was one way of beginning a story:

> Jessica married Trent on her eighteenth birthday. In six months she realized she had merely been in love with love and that she hated her husband. As the years went by, Trent grew coarse and brutal, tyrannical with the children and overbearing with his wife, whose life was a daily torment.

That was one way (which we must admit depressed us) and then there was another:

> Jessica Trent sat down at the dressing table and began mechanically to rub cold cream on her pallid face. Her thoughts were centred on a grim plan. Jessica had decided to kill her husband.

Yes, that was another way of beginning,—but that depressed us even more. It was "arresting" certainly, not to mention that more arresting was to follow. But we decided to experiment with a third way.

> Jessica Trent's husband sat down at his shaving-mirror and began mechanically to rub Mennen's Shaving Cream (adv.) on his pallid face. His thoughts were centred on a his eighteenth birthday. Then he had had no beard. Since then, however, his beard had been a daily torment.

No, that wouldn't do. It was more like writing a piece of copy. We discarded that volume and picked up another. As Chapters VIII seemed to be our method of procedure we turned to Chapter VIII again. This was about "Emphasis in Narrative." We decided to experiment with a bit of "Emphasis by Surprise," as outlined in section 9. We read that the reader would be impressed by that for which he had been least prepared. So we started in again.

> Jessica Trent's husband sat down at his pallid face and began mechanically to rub his eighteenth birthday with Mennen's Shaving Cream.

That was a bit startling. It seemed to us we had got a certain effect. But still, we weren't satisfied. We riffled back the pages and decided we must have a definite objective point as explained in the chapter on "Plot." We must bear in mind constantly the culmination of a series of events. We must know what was to happen and what was not to happen. Of course we knew a lot of things that wouldn't be allowed to happen, after reading a chapter on things to avoid in the Moving Picture. Well, anyway, we lit our pipe and sat down to think. . . . Those three dots, by the way, are *points de suspension,* as we have just learned. They are frequent with French authors—a kind of rash—and used to "Emphasize by Pause."

But maybe you don't know just what we mean to emphasize. Well, merely that—we fell asleep. When we woke up it was two hours later and still we had no idea of what was to happen or what was not to happen. So we decided to take up a list of the "Thirty-Six Dramatic Situations" in another volume. That might help us. The first situation given was "Supplication," but that didn't seem to help us. We didn't want Jessica's husband supplicating all over the place. In spite of our better nature, by this time we had taken quite a fancy to Jessica's husband, with his troubles with his beard and all, and we hadn't yet observed that he was mean to his wife or to the children. At least, as long as he sat there, he seemed to be all right. Of course, perhaps if he rose and began to move around some he would get all riled up. Still, you couldn't tell, yet. He seemed to be a pretty decent sort of fellow,—patient too—sitting there with all that shaving cream on his face, waiting for us to think out what to do with him.

Well, finally, long about the thirteenth situation, we came upon "*Technical Elements*: A Malevolent Kinsman, a Hated or Reciprocally Hating Kinsman." In this general category we decided to select "C—Hatred of Grandparent for Grandchild." We don't know what possessed us, but:

> Jessica Trent's grandchild sat down at her grandmother's dressing table and began mechanically to rub lip-rouge on the mirror. Her thoughts were centred on a grim plan. It was to rub blacking all over the bedspread. Her grandmother entered the room. "You bad girl," she exclaimed, and spanked her.

But there was the story ended, almost before it had begun! and it turned out merely to be one of those "Kewt Kwips of the Kiddies" that they pay five dollars apice for. We would have to write and sell two or three of them every day to keep even with our financial obligations, if we were to earn our living by our pen,—and we knew we could never keep it up.

We regarded the other volumes of the Palmer Institute Course with intellectual hunger but with dubiety as to their usefulness to us in particular. Anyway, we felt tired of Jessica Trent, and we had never liked her name in the first place. Sounded sort of made up. We didn't so much mind her husband, George L. Trent,—but we were now afraid to look in on him where he was still sitting before that infernal mirror waiting for us for heaven's sake to do something with him. As for the grandchild—and they'd only been married six months—we were quite at a loss to account for him. So we tiptoed stealthily down the stairs and out of that house of confusion.

W. R. B.

The Salad Bowl

THE primary obligation of the novelist ought to be to give the customer two dollars' worth. . . . If he can give the customer two dollars' worth, and, at the same time, lift the hood and give his soul a chance to cool off, that is fine; but some of us are not highly pleased by the oily exhalations that arise from the souls of most novelists when the lid is raised. Therefore, unless the novelist is sure that his soul has a peculiar and ingratiating aroma like camels or Djer-Kiss, let him sniff it in private, and sell the customers something that comes nearer the price of admission.—Elmer Davis, *Letter to W. C. McGeehan,* Esq.

Our country is being overrun with and by a putrid stream of the most despicable, the most iniquitous, and on the whole the most dangerous form of a degraded variety of literature; this stuff is being publicly sold and publicly sent through the mails; and so far no authority, public or otherwise, seems to be willing or able to stop the dissemination of this literary garbage. —Hendrick Willem van Loon, in *The Commonweal.*

The only visits I ever make nowadays are to the homes of bachelors; for the discomforts in the houses over which fair ladies pretend to preside are beyond belief. Men really seem to care whether their guests are comfortable or not. . . . In how many houses are the dressing-table lights properly arranged? What of the reading-lamp that should be on the table beside your bed?—Elisabeth Marbury in *The Commonweal.*

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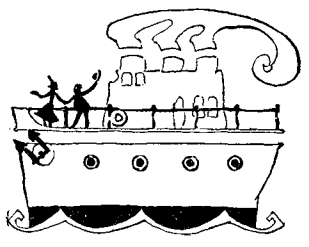

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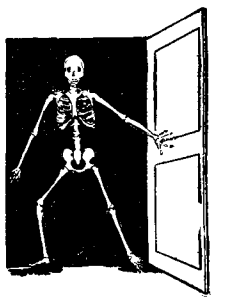

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